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CONTENTS

Why Europe is Deadlocked	*Vernon Bogdanor*	5
Reprieve (*story*)	*Marcus Toyne*	9
"Star Wars", or Peace-in-the-Skies (III)	*Michael Charlton*	12
Column	*M*	30

POEMS

Phoebe Hesketh 8, Gavin Ewart 28, K. W. Gransden 29,

NOTES & TOPICS

"The End of Thatcher"	*Edward Pearce*	33
Paris Notebook	*Jean-François Revel*	35
Moses with a Machine-Gun	*David Pryce-Jones*	40
The European Interlude	*Jean-Claude Casanova*	41

SPECIAL BOOK SECTION: POLITICS & WORLD AFFAIRS

From Disraeli to Thatcher	*Anthony Hartley*	43
The Other Diaspora	*Ben Segal*	49
Tito's Land, Tito's Legacy	*Christopher Cviić*	52
Strengths & Weaknesses	*David Spanier*	59
John Bull & After	*Max Beloff*	62
Books Encountered	*R.M.*	64

EAST & WEST

Ichiban, or Number One	*Anthony Thwaite*	65

INTERVIEW

Eco I, Eco II, Eco III	*Dieter E. Zimmer*	68

IN THE MARGIN

Race, Press, & Chromatic Deceits	*Melvin J. Lasky*	72

BOXES

"Neophobia", or the Fear of Space Defence (*Alun Chalfont*) 20,
Change of Habit (*Daily Mail*) 69, Tale of an Un-Magic Carpet (*V. K. Stahr*) 78

AUTHORS 76 — LETTERS 77 — LIFE & LETTERS 81

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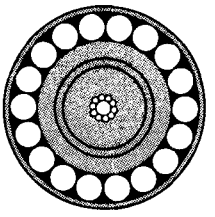
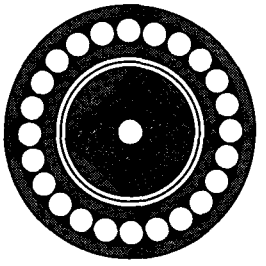
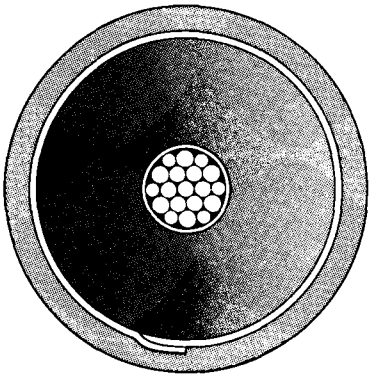


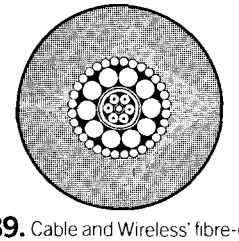
1866. First successful transatlantic cable. Roughly six months to transmit the Bible by Morse Code.



1956. First coaxial cable across the Atlantic. Thirty-six circuits bring phone calls as we know them today.



1974. Over 1,800 circuits – queuing eliminated.



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(January and February)

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(February)

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Graham Greene in Panama
(February)

IRVING KRISTOL
Transatlantic Misunderstanding
March)

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Bishops, Politicians, & Spiritual Times
(March)

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Reflections on "The Name of the Rose"
(April)

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Is Winston Churchill Still Relevant?
(April)

ANTHONY GLEES
Churchill's Last Gambit
(April)

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. . . and the Same Old Problems
(April)

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(April)

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The Changeling (story)
(May)

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(May)

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(May)

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Traveller in Albania
(May)

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(June)

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(June)

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Vernon Bogdanor

Why Europe is Deadlocked

British Ostrich, Continental Sands

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF being "European" is, so it would appear, primarily a 20th-century phenomenon. Before that, awareness of a specifically European attachment was largely confined to cultural utopians and political theorists. In the 18th century, Edmund Burke declared that no European could be a complete exile in any part of Europe, while in the 19th Saint-Simon spoke of "*le patriotisme européen*." But these prophets were hardly characteristic of their age.

It took two World Wars and the decline of Europe—the dissolution, indeed, of the traditional European state system—to put European unity on to the agenda of practical politics. As Europe came to fall under the hegemony of two superpowers—the one extra-European but benevolent, the other part-European but brutal—so it came to seem that there was something specifically European, a certain quality of civilisation, that was worth preserving.[1]

The war against Hitler was, in the words of Bishop Bell of Chichester, "a war of faith in which the nations themselves were divided." In part a conventional war between nation-states, it took on the character of an ideological struggle on behalf of a civilisation threatened with extinction by Nazi Germany. Yet "Europe" could survive only by calling in the aid of the United States and the Soviet Union to defend it. Was Europe, the smallest continent, becoming nothing more than a geographical expression, a remnant of past struggles whose future was now to be decided by extra-European powers? It was, fundamentally, this consciousness of vulnerability which led, west of the Iron Curtain, to the development and maturation of a European movement whose aim it was to realise that European patriotism of which Saint-Simon had spoken.

Britain remained, on the whole, oblivious of this current of thought precisely because she did not feel that sense of vulnerability which provided the inspiration for the European movement on the Continent. Her victory in World War II caused British statesmen to harbour a vastly exaggerated conception of her power, and led them chronically to underestimate the speed of recovery of the nations of the Continent.[2] Above all, Britain's political leaders failed to understand the changes which the years of the War had wrought in their Continental counterparts. For, if the means to be adopted for the construction of Europe were primarily economic, the central impulses were political, even psychological. "The reasons why European unity is useful, necessary, inevitable are quickly enumerated. They are mainly psychological", declared Walter Hallstein, first President of the Commission, in February 1965.[3] Not sharing the psychology of the nations of the Continent—a psychology born of Occupation and defeat—Britain found herself unable to appreciate the impulse behind the movement for European unity.

British Coolness, de Gaulle's Freeze

ENTERING THE COMMUNITY in 1973, the profound contrasts between Britain and her Continental neighbours remained. Not only were Britain's economic structure and legal procedures found to be very different from those of the original Six, but above all, on the central issue of what the Community was to become, Britain found herself with a different perception from that of its founder members.

For Britain had joined what she saw as a commercial arrangement, an organisation dedicated to the removal of trade barriers, and not a dynamic entity whose purpose was to "unify Europe." Admittedly, British politicians were perfectly willing to subscribe towards documents proclaiming the need for European Union,[4] although—or perhaps because—this was a concept they professed not to understand. (Speaking in November 1984, Mrs Thatcher declared that she "would like to know what is meant by it before I could tell whether I was for it or against it.") That was just a form of accommodating British diplomacy to the high-flown rhetoric

[1] See John Lukacs, *The Decline and Rise of Europe* (1965).

[2] See Michael Charlton's series in ENCOUNTER, "How (& Why) Britain Lost the Leadership of Europe" (August, September, October 1981), issued as a book by BBC Publications under the title *The Price of Victory* (1983).

[3] See David Calleo, *Europe's Future: The Grand Alternatives* (1967), p.3.

[4] As, for example, with the so-called Solemn Declaration on European Union signed at Stuttgart in June 1983. It had no practical effect.

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of foreigners, a way of making oneself *salonfähig*, part of the tribute which virtue pays to idealism. It did not represent any commitment towards a serious programme of action.

Convinced supporters of European integration—politicians such as Edward Heath and Roy Jenkins, who saw that British interests could no longer be defended within the traditional framework of the nation-state—were, no doubt, well aware that the Community was a developing new entity, and not merely an old-fashioned Customs Union. But they would have been quite unable to persuade the British people of the benefits of entry—a difficult enough task in any event—had they dared to suggest that the Community required anything more than a strictly limited commitment. Therefore, so the British electorate were assured, they should ignore the rhetoric of the Continentals. The sensible British would always ensure that the Community's feet remained firmly on the ground.

Lest this reassurance be thought insufficient, Britain could always rely on the fact that the Community could not advance without unanimous agreement. If common sense failed, the British could always use their veto. For the Treaty of Rome provides for majority voting only in a limited number of specific areas—mainly in agriculture, trade and transport, together with the Community Budget. And it is no coincidence that it is in these areas (apart from transport) that common policies have been achieved. Other common policies—in particular the achievement of a common internal market, a single domestic market for goods and services throughout the Community—require unanimous agreement in the Council of Ministers, Unanimity is also required for the addition of new competences to the Community and for amendments to the Treaty of Rome.

The misnamed "Luxembourg Compromise" of 1966—forced on the Community by General de Gaulle—extended the unanimity requirement even beyond the provisions of the Treaty of Rome. For it provides that a Member State invoking a vital national interest can insist on indefinite postponement of a decision in the Council of Ministers. Since there is no objective test of what constitutes a "vital national interest", the effect of the Luxembourg Compromise has been to allow a Member State to invoke a "vital national interest" on almost any occasion it chooses. Although not frequently invoked, the Compromise nevertheless casts a shadow over the whole working of the Community; for, with each Member State aware that it cannot be outvoted, agreement comes to be based on the lowest common denominator of consent. General de Gaulle thus succeeded in 1966 in freezing the development of the Community. For, while the requirement of unanimity may have been tolerable in a Community of Six, all relatively homogeneous states, in a Community of Twelve it is likely to render innovation quite impossible. "How", asked President Mitterrand in his address to the European Parliament in May 1984,

> "can a complex and diversified unit that the Community has become be governed by the rules of the Diet of the old Kingdom of Poland, where every member could block decisions. We all know where that led. . . ."

The Roots of the Difficulty

That the Treaty of Rome is in drastic need of reform would seem difficult to deny. It was designed for the very different world of the 1950s; and it has the character of a general declaration of aims and a framework for action, rather than a catalogue of precise obligations. The Treaty does not in fact provide the instruments with which its ambitious aims can be achieved. It is striking that many of the Community policies now under discussion (such as completion of the internal market, and the introduction of a common transport policy) were already laid down in the Treaty signed nearly 30 years ago in 1957. Yet the Treaty does not place its objectives in sufficiently precise a form to enable them to be realised. It is, for example, left entirely to the discretion of the Council of Ministers to determine the objectives of the "common transport policy" and the means to achieve them. But the Council has done neither, a failure described by M. Moreau, a member of the European Parliament, as "certainly the most spectacular of all the shortcomings of Community integration."[5]

Further, the Treaty contains no reference at all to such competences as industry and technology, or research-and-development (except with reference to agriculture), which the Community must exercise if it is to be effective. A stark warning as to the consequences of the failure to develop a European technological policy has recently been given by Dr Wisse Dekker, chairman of Philips: "The only form in which a European industrial policy is possible is, indeed, on a pan-European level" (*Financial Times*, 25 April 1985). This warning has been echoed by the Albert-Ball Report for the European Parliament, *Towards European Economic Recovery in the 1980s*, which concluded (p. 31) that

> "For the first time since the 18th century the major formative initiatives of an industrial revolution are not originating in Europe. Europe is 'missing out' on the third industrial revolution."

Yet, because the Treaty says nothing about economic and technological policy, the Community's competence in these areas lacks legitimacy; and it finds that it cannot develop a European industrial policy.

The Treaty, moreover, does not establish institutions whose method of operation meets contemporary requirements of efficacy and democratic accountability. For the European Parliament, the only body elected by universal suffrage to represent the interests of Europeans, is unable to hold the executive institutions of the Community properly to account. Except in the budgetary field, it has no legislative power at all; and, in any case, its powers are wrongly focused, being directed at the Commission which ought to be its ally in furthering Community policy, rather than at the Council of Ministers. This means that there is a vacuum of accountability—a democratic deficit—in the Community.

[5] Committee on Institutional Affairs (European Parliament), PE 83. 326/fin./C, p. 49.

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Because its powers are not subject to democratic control, national governments are, understandably, hesitant about transferring further competences to Community level. So an injection of democracy into Community institutions is essential if it is to be able to develop new policies.

THAT REFORM OF THE COMMUNITY is vital if it is to achieve the aims which its members expect of it was the conclusion reached by the European Parliament in February 1984 when it endorsed a new Draft Treaty establishing European Union by a substantial majority, comprising a majority of members of the Parliament from every Member State (including Britain) with the exception of Denmark. The Draft Treaty did not provide for any major extension of Community competences; but it defined existing competences in a more detailed and explicit way, establishing for major competences binding programmes and timetables for securing action. In addition, it proposed an altered balance between the institutions of the Community so as to secure greater effectiveness of decision-making and more democratic accountability.

The conclusions of the Draft Treaty were broadly endorsed in 1985 by the so-called Dooge Committee, consisting of representatives of the heads of state and government of the Community and the Commission. Yet, as with so many of the attempts to rejuvenate the Community, these imaginative proposals have run into the sand. For, at the Luxembourg meeting of the European Council in December 1985, the governments of the Member States could agree only upon minimal reforms which are unlikely to alter anything very much. "The spirit of the Community's founding fathers", claimed Giulio Andreotti, Italy's Foreign Minister, "has died away. De Gaulle is dead, but his intellectual heritage still remains. . . ."

Anybody Here for a New Constitution?

ANY FUNDAMENTAL restructuring of the Community would require amendment of the Treaty of Rome. It would need constitutional change. Yet here, too, Britain's historical preconceptions set her at odds with her Continental neighbours and obscure a rational calculation of her interests.

For the British approach to constitutional matters is evolutionary and not rationalist. Whereas the West German state began its existence in 1949, while the French state was reconstituted in 1946 and renewed in 1958, Britain has never *begun* as a constitutional entity in the same way. We have often felt the need to adjust our institutions, but not—since the 17th century at least—to re-create the State.

> "Institutions [Mr Malcolm Rifkind, formerly Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, declared] must be subservient to policies. Closer cooperation should not be forced but must grow out of practical ways in which as a Community we can work together for our common good. Substance and reality must come before form. That is the real cement of closer Community cooperation."[6]

The stance of the Continental members of the Community towards constitutional change is very different. For they have been forced, within the lifetime of many of their citizens, to think carefully and seriously about the preconditions of constitutional and political order. Italy and West Germany have had to reconstruct the very foundations of the state following defeat in war. France has been compelled to come to terms with the trauma of 1940 when obedience to the state was treason, but defiance to its dictates the only true loyalty. Holland has, since the *pacificatie* of 1917, taken immense pains to conciliate Catholics, Protestants, Liberals and Socialists within the framework of a single state; while Belgium has spent much of the last twenty years painfully restructuring its Constitution so as to accommodate two linguistic communities within its borders. It is hardly surprising if there is a strong sense of the importance of constitutional arrangements in the countries of the Continent, something which is entirely absent in Britain.

The Fallacy of British Gaullism

THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD when reform of the Community has been under discussion, Britain's attitude has been one of which de Gaulle might have been proud. Negative and insular, Britain has allowed herself to be seen as hostile to what M. Jacques Poos, Luxembourg's Foreign Minister, has called "the objectives of the second generation." Indeed, successive British Governments, whether led by Mr James Callaghan or Mrs Margaret Thatcher, have, like de Gaulle, insisted upon the primacy of the veto. Only in this way, so they have argued, could there by any assurance that Britain's interests would be properly protected. It is for this reason that Britain was to be found, with the reluctant Danes and Andreas Papandreou's Greece, in the camp of opposition to reforms designed to unfreeze the Community.

That it is in Britain's interest to ape the Gaullists is generally taken for granted. Yet the arguments for such a stance are rarely articulated; and they are indeed highly suspect. Indeed, a powerful counter-argument could be presented to the effect that it was actually in Britain's interest to press for an extension of majority voting. Britain has at least as much to gain as any other Member State of the Community from the liberalisation of trade, and especially from the completion of the internal market. A free market in financial services, in particular, would be of considerable benefit to Britain, whose insurance industry is acknowledged as the most efficient in the Community, as well as saving the Community around £600m. (according to Sir Geoffrey Howe, Britain's Foreign Secretary, in a speech in Milan on 7 March 1985). Yet the internal market is regulated by Articles of the Treaty of Rome which require unanimity.

[6] Speech at Dundee, 23 September 1983, cited in Conservative Research Department *Handbook for Europe (1984)*.

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The problem which this poses for the British Government has been well stated by Mr W. F. Newton Dunn, a Conservative member of the European Parliament (in a letter to *The Times*, 4 March 1985):

> ". . . the Government faces an important choice of tactics. One course is to try to persuade the other nine national governments to agree unanimously to abolish each of the many hidden national barriers against trade. On past performance, however, such a series of unanimous decisions will be equivalent to a series of miracles."

The alternative would be to amend the Treaty so as to provide for an extension of majority voting.

DE GAULLE ACTED RATIONALLY according to his lights. He froze the European Community after, but not before, the passage of one major common policy—the Common Agricultural Policy—which was very much in France's interests. It was perfectly understandable for de Gaulle then to ensure that no further common policies, which might operate to the detriment of France, could be agreed. France, after all, was a satisfied power.

But Britain remains a dissatisfied power. The Common Agricultural Policy, agreed before Britain entered the Community, was hardly suited to a country with a small agricultural sector. And so Britain joined the Community with its structure weighted against her—an inevitable consequence, perhaps, of her unwillingness to join when the rules were being formulated. It would seem, however, that the rational strategy for Britain to adopt would have been to join with those other Member States, such as Italy, who were seeking to reform the Community so that it might develop new common policies—policies which might operate more to the benefit of Britain than the Common Agricultural Polcy has done.

That this has not happened—that, indeed, Britain has taken the opposite stance—must be accounted as a supreme triumph of ideology over national self-interest. De Gaulle, for all his talk of French sovereignty, was perfectly prepared to pool it where that was to France's advantage. But Gaullism for Britain simply means freezing the Community so that the only major common policy which it can sustain is one that is inimical to our interests. How on earth, then, can one be a British Gaullist?

The Ostrich Attitude

BRITISH GOVERNMENTS, therefore, have persisted in defending positions inimical not only to the development of European cooperation, but even to Britain's own national interest. Indeed, Britain's stance towards the Community exemplifies perfectly what one commentator has called "the poverty of explanation and justification which has characterised British foreign policy over the last twenty years."[7]

Low expectations and an unwillingness to recognise the importance of institutions have certainly played their part. But, behind it all, it is difficult not to recognise the dead weight of inherited habits of mind and unquestioned assumptions from the past—the same syndrome which makes us laud our adversary party system and our antediluvian structure of industrial relations as models to be admired rather than examples to be avoided. As the sad history of Britain's relations with the Continent since 1945 shows, these habits of mind have imposed very heavy costs.

Unwilling to rethink the role of a middle-ranking industrialised democracy, we have been forced, time and again, to accommodate ourselves to decisions made by others whose purpose is to serve the interests of others. It is time, surely, for the ostrich to take its head out of the sand and face reality.

[7] William Wallace, *The Foreign Policy Process in Britain* (Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1975), p. 90.

A Very Small Casualty

Flower
lovingly pressed in an album
petals preserved cruciform
colours dried to a moth's wing.

Rabbit
equally flat on tarmac
stamped to a flash of crimson, fringed
with skin and hair
parchment-thin under tear and tread.

At human pace I see
spun from the flattened centre
the white scut blown as thistledown,
and gleaming jewel-bright, upturned
to the blind indifferent world,
a single eye.

Phoebe Hesketh

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Marcus Toyne

Reprieve

THE STUDENT NURSE opened her mouth to say something in reply but eventually thought better of it. There was, after all, nothing of consequence to be said; Mr Travers was not the sweetest-tempered of men, not at the best of times. And this was hardly the best of times. No, this was a case for tactful silence.

She realised that she was under scrutiny; the little surgeon was doing his usual trick of trying to make her feel as awkward as he possibly could. She stood her ground and smiled uneasily. When he finally did speak, she enjoyed a certain sense of triumph, because it was evident he had been hoping for her to say something which he could pounce on.

"Is this your first time on casualty, nurse?"

She shook her head.

"So you're just going to stand there with your mouth open then? This is an emergency, for God's sake!"

She nodded.

"Good, good, good", he muttered savagely. "So you're aware of . . . of . . . just a minute."

She was about to break her private vow not to speak, when she saw that he had lost interest in goading her and was staring intently at the figure stretched out on the operating-table before them. The head injuries were spectacular enough, but the rest of the body was quite unmarked, and providing you could avoid looking at the appalling carnage of that crushed skull, the face itself was mercifully unmutilated. No horror there: the expression was positively serene.

Nurse and doctor looked at each other, their own breath held, now that the stertorous breathing of their patient had fluttered and failed. The girl wondered if she was about to witness heart massage, and rather hoped not; however, it was evident from Travers's dismissive shrug that no resuscitation was to be attempted.

"How he kept going as long as this is beyond me, my girl", said the doctor, suddenly genial, even avuncular, after his earlier spikiness. It came to her that his customary brusqueness was simply self-protective. As the two of them walked out of the theatre, peeling off surgical gloves, a professional camaraderie glowed between them. Together they had seen a man die, and there had been something curiously impressive about it. She had never seen anyone die before; the prospect of it had frightened her. Yet now, someone had gone, and it had not been terrible at all. She felt light-hearted, and the unceremonious disposal of the body on a trolley, which she could see out of the corner of her eye, seemed quite insignificant. Of course, she hadn't known this person; it would have been very different if it had been someone close to her. She tried to imagine how shattering it would have been, had that been the case, but her imagination baulked and she was only too glad to accept the steaming cup of coffee handed to her by Mr Travers. *She* was alive, that was the main thing, and the coffee smelt marvellous; surely she had acquitted herself creditably, she had arrived.

"ALL RIGHT, all right, I'll be there. 'Bout half an hour, O.K.?" She grunted agreement, and slowly he put down the receiver. No going back now, no going back at all. A kind of heaviness descended on him, a heaviness so palpable that it was as if he had donned a thick serge greatcoat. How was it possible for a few words spoken into a black mouthpiece to change everything so utterly? And yet that was the joke, nothing had changed at all. They were back exactly where they had started, and now they would presumably carry on regardless.

He grimaced irritably. Why was it that under pressure, one invariably thought in clichés? It was rather like those pictures of disaster victims who always looked as if they were *pretending* to be grief-stricken, like ham actors. And yet their emotions were real enough, just as his inner agitation had that authentic jagged edge.

He glanced out of the window and saw with distaste that it was about to rain—again. It had been raining on and off all day; sudden savage squalls accompanied by much colder winds than seemed reasonable at this time of year. But then he always managed to forget just how icy it could be in April. He went out to the hall and opened the cupboard under the stairs. He started back in alarm: how absurd! It was only his old grey mac, but momentarily it had looked like a menacing figure, a hanging man. Clumsily he pushed his arm through the sleeve of the mac, tearing the lining in the process. This minor mishap fortified him with a welcome spurt of anger, and by the time he had slammed the front door

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behind him, oppression had lifted and he set off towards the river almost jauntily. The rain held off.

He had said half an hour, so there was no need to hurry. She would be there first, waiting outside the door. Oh yes, *she* would be at the church on time!

Low tide, the surface of the water ruffled and muddy. But the bridges were as impressive as ever; Lambeth Bridge already in sight and Vauxhall Bridge behind him. He started to murmur a litany of bridges to himself: Albert, Putney, Hungerford, Tower Bridge. . . . Suddenly it was as if he could see them in his mind's eye from above, a bomber's view in grainy black and white. The buses which roared past him were red enough though, roaring along the Embankment past the Tate, their sound and fury contributing to that slightly hysterical atmosphere which London always engendered in him. The sheer bustle of the city stimulated him, the extraordinary eagerness with which people chose to hurtle from one part of the metropolis to another. Silly really, but exciting all the same. Not that he had any intention of hurtling; no sir, he would stroll like Burlington Bertie. A gust of wind rose off the river like an evil exhalation; he shivered and put up his collar. Perhaps, on second thoughts, it wasn't quite strolling weather.

So they were reconciled. The eleventh hour of the eleventh day and all that. A police car sped past with a banshee scream. He looked across the river at Lambeth Palace and for no particulr reason broke into a harsh laugh, redolent of opera or horror film. A passing youth with his hair standing on end, wearing torn jeans and an orange T-shirt, smiled understandingly. The words READY AND WILLING were emblazoned across the chest of the shirt in shrieking pink.

So Jake the Rake had been given his marching orders. Poor old Jake! Now that it was all over, he found himself feeling quite sorry for the bloke. Decent sort in his way; bit of a wet, but pathetically concerned about doing the Right Thing. Which *was* rather a nonsense of course when you're having it off with somebody's wife. Not that he had ever been able to make up his mind whether Jake was having an affair with her.

Anyway, Jake was out of the picture now; and whether he had or had not been to bed with her was academic. In about twenty minutes, his marriage would carry on where it had left off. There had been a hiccup, that was all, a mere burp. Jake, a mere burp—a shit who passed in the night, Jake the Rake . . . how trivial it all seemed now. How trivial things always seemed—once they were over.

He glanced through the huge arch, looking up towards the Westminster Hospital, and saw the tiny figures of patients walking across a multi-storey glass bridge. He had visited a friend at the Westminster once, so he knew why patients favoured the bridge; they were allowed to smoke there.

He walked slowly down the steps into Victoria Tower Gardens, past a garish mini-version of the Albert Memorial and on towards the Houses of Parliament and Rodin's Burghers. As he cut across the grass, a party of Japanese tourists, festooned with cameras, rushed obediently towards the river to be shown something by their pink-faced guide.

Just short of the Rodin statue, he stopped deliberately and stared unseeingly at the Calais Burghers eternally frozen in their moment of agony and glory. The Japanese tourists had all lined themselves up by the Embankment wall to be photographed by one of their number. He shut his eyes but the after-image of that collective grin would not fade. After a short hesitation, he wandered to the wall and gazed out over the river as the tourists dispersed with little twittering cries.

"But she doesn't love me!" he said aloud. This was the truth he had always known, the truth that had been blurted out by one or other of them more than once, but never really acknowledged. So why did she want him back? It wasn't as if there were children to consider. And certainly she had loved Jake; loved him, as they say, to distraction. She might have sent him packing, but she would go on loving him. She couldn't possibly stop. And even if she could, that was no guarantee that she felt any differently about her husband.

He turned away from the wall, and continued back towards the road past the huge cliff-face of Barry's neo-Gothic masterpiece. He was halfway across the road when the rain came entirely without warning. He took refuge in a convenient telephone box and watched people scurrying for cover all around him. Several of them cast a covetous eye on his shelter, but gave up when they saw him apparently preparing to make a call. He felt the need to look like an authentic caller in order to justify his occupation of the box. He even went as far as dialling a number at random, but of course nothing happened, because he hadn't actually put any money in.

The receiver buzzed blandly in his ear and he said, "Hello!" loudly into the mouthpiece. Now that he had started on this charade, he might as well go the whole hog. "Not a good line, I'm afraid."

He spent a few seconds running through a gamut of appropriate "listening" expressions: nods, raised eyebrows, little frowns and the like. He was beginning to enjoy this game: it was peculiarly gratifying to talk into a dead phone while all those bums out there thought he was having a proper conversation. Not that there were many bums in sight; the torrential rain had cleared them off the streets. Perhaps the bevy of Japanese had leapt atavistically into the Thames like so many lemmings. So no audience; why then the pretence? He was about to put the receiver back on to its hook, when he thought better of it and started talking in earnest.

"The line's cleared. I . . . I'm going to say what I *really* feel—"

"That'll be a change", said a phantom.

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"It's that sort of remark that has spoilt our relationship in the past; that sort of snide little remark. You've no idea how damaging that kind of thing can be."

"Haven't I, darling?"

"Look, I'm not at all certain that this . . . this second time round is altogether a good idea. I'm sure that Jake would—"

"Jake wouldn't: Jake isn't."

"Well, all right, let's leave him out of it then. I'm talking about you and me—"

"Tea for two, and two for tea—"

"If you aren't prepared to be serious . . . why can't you just shut up and listen for once?"

There was a long pause and he sensed that he had laid the ghost for the moment at least. He could speak without interruption. He knew, however, with misgiving, that he had no idea what he wanted to say. There was no flow, no orderly stream of thought. It was as if his mother tongue had suddenly become a foreign language in which he could not express the simplest thing easily.

"Look", he said at last in a voice drained of resonance, "I don't think that you really want us to be together again. You're trying to be nice or something. Sugaring the pill. There'll always be the Jake business for us to live down; we shan't be able to forget about it. I *saw* how you felt about him; he brought you to life. I can't bring you to life; never could, never will. Why . . . why can't we leave things as they were? I . . . I don't think I can bear to go through any more. . . ."

"No, I don't think you can either, love", she said, and this time the inaudible voice sounded warm and kind, the way it had sounded in the old days. He could feel tears coursing down his cheeks, and it was some time before he felt able to speak again.

"We'll have to do the best we can, that's all", he said at length. "It isn't a question of blame, not that, no, it isn't a question of blame at all."

And even as he said it, he realised that he truly didn't blame her for what had happened. Any more than he blamed himself. Staring out through the dingy glass of the telephone booth, he saw people starting to emerge from their hiding-places now that the rain was beginning to stop, and a deep compassion arose within him for all of them. Not one of them was to blame; they simply didn't know what they were doing, didn't know where they were going.

"Poor old mankind", he murmured, "poor old mankind. What an appalling mess we've made of everything, and yet we haven't been able to help it. It hasn't really been our fault. There's a deep flaw; we were wrongly programmed in the first place."

He pushed open the door of the telephone box and looked up at the sky. Yes, there was a hint of blue there, and the rain had virtually petered out. He could go on his way, if not rejoicing exactly, at least with an inchoate understanding of his predicament, of the human predicament in general.

THE MAN WORKING at the top of the building never even knew that he had dislodged the piece of masonry. He was striding across to join his mates by the time it reached its target. It wasn't negligence or manslaughter or anything culpable; nobody's fault in particular.

The man walking hurriedly towards the Abbey never even knew that the piece of masonry had struck him. No interruption, just transition. Transition from time and space to that strange realm where everything appears in quite a new light.

As the ambulance men gingerly eased their load into the back of the vehicle and drove the few hundred yards down the road to the hospital, their apparently oblivious patient was taking leisurely stock of all that had passed in the course of his lifetime: childhood, youth and after. Again and again he was presented with what he had been and done, and again and again he had to find it in his heart to forgive himself and all those with whom he had been connected. For him the only true healing could come in dying, and at the time of death itself, he knew that now at last he was whole and that he was reprieved.

THE WOMAN PEERED ANXIOUSLY about her over the heads of the group of Japanese tourists who were being marshalled at the West Door before they entered the Abbey. An ambulance had drawn up nearby but soon left with a screech of tyres. She glanced at her watch again, unable to believe that such a short time had passed since she consulted it the last time. It was ridiculous to be so impatient; he was always late, and she was always early. It was one of their little bones of contention and no doubt they would pick it again in the future. There would always be bones to pick, their life would never be perfect; but she knew nevertheless that she had made the right decision. Breaking it to Jake had been difficult, but he had been very sweet about it; indeed, she suspected that, truth to tell, he was relieved as well as genuinely sad. And she had been relieved too; the sacrifice, if it was a sacrifice, had been made, and she was ready to continue with her marriage. If there was compromise, there was also promise; the very fact that she now knew that the relationship would never be ideal made it more worthwhile in a funny way. Besides, she loved him.

All the same, it was *maddening* the way he could not get here on time! She could feel her gall rising; it was going to cost her dear to hold back her anger, but hold it back she must at a moment of such delicate balance.

Once again, she looked at her watch, and even as she looked, the man on the table in the hospital stopped breathing.

She sniffed and bit her lip, scanning the passers-by; still no sign. A thought wormed its way into the foreground of her mind and try as she might, it refused to be stared out of countenance. Supposing he didn't turn up after all. . . . She shivered and moved forward out of the shadow of the church into the fitful sunshine.

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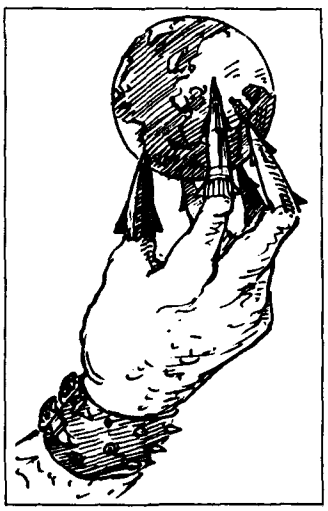
Michael Charlton

"Star Wars" or Peace-in-the-Skies (III)

A Short History of Dreams & Nightmares

5. A Defence in Space



A LONGING to recapture the past has a history of its own in the American political tradition. John Dos Passos wrote of this national nostalgia that "In times of change and danger, when there is a quicksand of fear under men's reasoning, a sense of continuity with generations gone before can stretch like a lifeline across the scary present. . . ." President Reagan was not elected because he offered America pessimism—but because he embodied in his feelings and beliefs the reassurance of old certainties. Among the historical certainties which have made America a society of well-fulfilled promises has been the vitality and exuberance of its applied technology. American technology—democratising its ideas and innovations from Edison's electric light to Ford's motor car and the present-day computer—has spread out all over the atlas, transforming modern living everywhere.

The President's Strategic Defence Initiative ("Star Wars") speech of 23 March 1983 draws heavily on faith in this tradition. President Reagan called upon the scientific community to

> **"give us the means of rendering nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete with the ultimate goal of eliminating the threat posed by strategic nuclear missiles."**

But that threat has formed the architecture of strategic equilibrium and nuclear deterrence. The President has moved the goal-posts. We have come full circle from the great debate initiated by Robert McNamara in the 1960s—which led to the virtual renunciation of defence against nuclear retaliation. Whether the "Star Wars" concept will prove helpful or harmful in building a more stable world may already be academic. Defence against the ballistic missile has acquired a self-interested impetus. We do not have the luxury of waiting—possibly for many years—for a scientific verdict on its practicality; "Star Wars" is politics now.

The President himself is a figure of central importance. His sentiments are in step with the platform on which he was elected. This called for an overall military and technological superiority over the Soviet Union, and included the injunction:

> **"to pursue the vigorous research and development of an effective anti-ballistic missile system, such as is already at hand in the Soviet Union—as well as more modern ABM technologies."**

In the early days of his Administration the President put this question before a number of scientists. Among the most influential was the dark, brooding intelligence of the brilliant Hungarian émigré who had fought and won the seminal argument with Robert Oppenheimer over whether America should build the Hydrogen Bomb. In the course of several meetings with President Reagan in 1982, Dr Edward Teller played a major part in encouraging the President to believe that a novel way might be found to replace the bleak presumptions of "mutual assured destruction" which have dominated the superpower rivalry for a third of this century.

EDWARD TELLER: The policy of the West is to preserve peace. We tried to do it by deterrence—because on the other side, in the East, there is an expansionist, imperialistic power. Peace was to be preserved by the obvious means of deterrence: the menace of retaliation. It was called "mutual assured destruction", MAD, and I don't think any of us liked it from the very beginning. It has been not quite morally acceptable: not to me, not (I believe) to any reasonable person. There seemed to be no alternative.

Now an alternative *has* emerged. We find in our developing technology more and more possibilities of real defence. Not with the idea (and, I would certainly say, not with the assurance) of *complete* protection, but with the idea that defence can make the result of aggression doubtful—we hope *highly* doubtful, because the Kremlin is as power-hungry as the Nazis ever were. They are much more cautious—

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therefore we believe they can be deterred by an effective defence. To this has to be added that the Soviets are working on defence. Thereby aggression and retaliation will not only become morally bankrupt but also bankrupt in a strict technical sense. This is what made the Strategic Defence Initiative and generally, an emphasis on Defence, both possible and necessary.

—What do you say to those who say that "mutual assured destruction" is not a doctrine, it's a fact of life, the inescapable reality of the nuclear age?

TELLER: It *seemed* inescapable—now through detailed technical discussions we find that it is *not* inescapable. It failed, because throughout history (certainly throughout recent history) it has been clearly proved that a governmental policy which is not supported by the will of the people is not going to succeed.

EDWARD TELLER'S SUMMARY of his views to President Reagan offered compelling political inducements. By then the Catholic Bishops in America had added their moral concern about nuclear deterrence to the popular ferments of the Peace and the Freeze movements. Large-scale political demonstrations against the Cruise and *Pershing* missiles—the West's response to the Soviet Union's attempt to tilt the balance on the Continent by introducing in large numbers a new first-strike weapon, the *SS*-20—had been a struggle for the soul of Europe.

In the unremitting competition with the Russians, Strategic Defence—and the new "X-ray" laser and non-nuclear technologies—held out the prospects of popular support which had been grudgingly given, or even withheld, from competitive increases in the vast destructive power of the nuclear arsenals. In addition, Dr Teller's advice was that *mutual assured survival*, rather than "mutual assured destruction", could be installed on terms favourable to the West.

To the still uncertain extent that it is really serious political business, the "Star Wars" concept could undo whatever benefit the Russians believe has accrued to them from their strategic modernisation programme of the past twenty years. They could be contemplating the obsolescence of their huge land-based missile force before the end of this century. It is clear that, given their assessment of the state of the Soviet economy, the Americans believe the Russians will be at a competitive disadvantage: if not in science itself, then in the applications of that science. What then is open to the Soviet Union to do about it? President Reagan's Defence Secretary—Caspar Weinberger.

CASPAR WEINBERGER: I think there are a number of things that they could do. They could certainly agree—to their own very great advantage economically as well as militarily—to vastly lower levels of offensive armament. This would enable both of us to maintain deterrence, but at considerably lower cost and at considerably less threat and risk.

So far they haven't shown the slightest interest in doing that. The SALT agreements (SALT I and SALT II) unfortunately didn't *reduce* arms at all. They authorised an increase in arms. The Soviets, without violating SALT II, increased their number of nuclear warheads by an enormous extent during the period since that Agreement was signed (even though it was not formally ratified or enacted, so to speak). They *do* need a respite. They can't feed themselves; their agriculture is in very bad shape; their economy is not such that will produce any kind of quality of life for the individual citizen.

—You say that they need a respite. Do you subscribe to the belief that they face, perhaps, a "turning-point" in their history?

WEINBERGER: I don't think they recognise, or are prepared to recognise yet, that they do face any kind of turning-point; and I don't see any real change, or any real possibility of modification of their basic policies.

—In other words, a retreat by them is seen by you as very unlikely.

WEINBERGER: Very unlikely indeed.

—They will not sacrifice their world position for "domestic reform"?

WEINBERGER: Well, not only not sacrifice their position. They will do everything they can to increase their military capabilities, and along with it everything else.

—Why is the existing concept of deterrence proving inadequate (or likely to prove inadequate), as you see it?

WEINBERGER: It is based upon the idea that both sides are perfectly safe if both sides are perfectly vulnerable. That's all right, perhaps, if you have *total agreement*: not only as to the concept, as to the strategy, but also its execution.

The ABM Treaty and the concept of "Mutual Assured Destruction" is based on the idea that there will, first of all, be equality (or very close to it) or "parity" on *offensive* systems; and that there will be no activity on the *defensive* side, except the relatively ineffective kinds specifically authorised by that Treaty—that is, a ground-based system which is around 50% effective. Unfortunately, neither of those assumptions has been adhered to by the Soviet Union. They have violated the treaty with the construction of the radar at Krasnoyarsk—which cannot have any direct application except as part of a Strategic Defence capability. . . .

—It bears no other interpretation?

WEINBERGER: No, I don't think so at all. I understand all of the arguments the Soviets make, but you don't build radar like that for any of those purposes. You can acquire that kind of capability far more simply and in different locations. The other thing is that the ABM Treaty itself—and almost everybody seems to have forgotten this—called for an early

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meeting to discuss and agree upon very substantial reductions in offensive weapons. And that never took place.

—What role will your Strategic Defence Initiative play if you wish to **compel** *the Soviet Union to make these reductions? Presumably they will answer that they need the edge they possess (in the numbers of offensive missiles) to cope with any such development.*

WEINBERGER: That overlooks the question of how the West is going to cope with the Soviet Strategic Defence—on which they have been working for seventeen years—whereas we have, practically speaking, just started. Strategic Defence, I think, can play a very major role both in enhancing deterrence and ultimately (if we are successful—and we don't know if we will be) in removing a lot of the threat and the shadow of terror that nuclear weapons, possessed by the Soviets, have cast over the world.

THIS UNDERLINES the emotional appeal of the "Star Wars" concept—the prospect of liberating humanity from nuclear bombardments. Unlike the last time Strategic Defence was an issue in the USA—at the end of the 1960s—there is an absence today of that feeling of generosity with which Robert McNamara felt the Soviet Union might be treated. McNamara's hopes were that once the USA had so spectacularly overhauled the dramatic strategic advantage that the Soviet Union acquired by being first into space with *Sputnik*, time and technology would bring about "a convergence" of ideas—that a plateau of nuclear sufficiency would then have been established beyond which the Russians would not wish to go. The generosity was symbolised by McNamara's dismantling of the (then probably superior) American strategic defences in search of agreement.

With the Carter years came explicit concern that the Soviet Union did not believe the concept of military advantage had been made obsolete by the nuclear weapon—Harold Brown's thesis of continual, uninterrupted "building." Today the men of influence in the Reagan Administration are persuaded that there is a permanent dialectic of the two contending political wills. I asked the scientist who for decades has played a pivotal role in the nuclear era about his faith in the aggressive exploitation of technology rather than diplomacy to save the West from nuclear war.

EDWARD TELLER: Let me change your question. I would call it the *defensive* exploitation of technology, not aggressive exploitation.

I don't underestimate diplomacy. Diplomacy involving, say, the United States and France is difficult enough, requires lots of ingenuity, and has rewards. But diplomacy in discussions with people whose clearly pursued purpose is to use diplomacy as a weapon to break agreements (secretly or openly, whenever it serves their purpose), and to strive for agreements which are not equitable—I believe that kind of diplomacy has to be handled with very great care. I do not give priority to technology. I just claim that the big changes of our times, in civilian life as well as in military surroundings, turn on technology—not because we want it so, but because technology usually changes more rapidly than people's conception of science and technology can follow.

—And so the vital necessity, as you see it, of maintaining a "technological edge" for the West rules out the concession to the Soviet Union of that equality that they are always seeking and demanding as an instrument of policy from the West?

TELLER: The Soviets demand equality—they seek superiority. Indeed, equality is a mirage. In a rapidly developing field—which is hard to follow even if you know all the details—where you may, with great diligence, know all the relevant details on our side, but where we are completely denied the inside data where the Soviets stand—how do you know whether you are "equal" or not? If you try to make sure that you are not ahead of them, you are apt to make sure that they are ahead of us. I believe that equality is a word of beautiful sound, of great moral depth, and of no practical applicability whatsoever.

DR TELLER'S DISMISSAL OF the principle of equality identifies also the dead end in the theory of Arms Control, where the condition of agreement is that both sides accept the same objective: stability through equality.

Since the first SALT agreement in 1972, which was provisional in character, neither side has been able to agree in their calculations of equality. The experience of years of Arms Control since then has been described by Hal Sonnenfeldt (one of Henry Kissinger's aides in those first negotiations in Moscow): "What is militarily significant is not negotiable—and what is negotiable is not militarily significant."

There are 10-12,000 strategic nuclear weapons in the Soviet offensive arsenal today, aimed at perhaps 100 American cities. They may grow to 15-20,000 in the next ten years. Millions of human lives on either side are thrown into this equation. The Strategic Defence Initiative has been put forward as a moral and practical answer, but the claims of "deliverance" made for this concept have been met with widespread disbelief by reputable scientists. Whether the President and his advisers have allowed an initial enthusiasm to go further than the laws of nature (or the history of conflict) will allow, awaits another—and a later—judgment.

Dr George Keyworth—one of the younger generation of American physicists and a protégé of Edward Teller—was Science Adviser at the time to the President of the United States, and helped to draft the "Star Wars" speech.

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GEORGE KEYWORTH: It is the threat of a first strike (that is, the loss of our own retaliatory capabilities) that has led to the arms race. Now, with the Strategic Defence Initiative, even in its first stages, the feasibility of a first strike is immediately removed. We no longer need these gigantic arsenals. The ICBM is, in large measure, no longer a practical weapon to initiate war. Here is the catalyst to achieve, not a 10% reduction in ICBMs, but to drastically diminish the 1,400 missiles that the Soviet Union possesses today to merely enough to maintain a strong deterrent. This could be dozens, could be a hundred.

—But in order to be successful, the SDI needs, does it not, a reduction in the **offensive** *missiles of the Soviet Union?*

KEYWORTH: I don't think so at all. That's a very important point to remember, as Paul Nitze, our most experienced arms negotiator, has pointed out time and time again. There must be two criteria satisfied by the SDI. One, that it be cost-effective. Now that's really very simple: what he means is that a unit of defence must be cheaper than a unit of offence. Defence must be cheaper than the Soviet Union simply building more missiles. And secondly, that it must be "survivable" and thus not invite a first-strike attack. Now if those criteria are met—and we believe that we can meet those criteria, after we have done some more research—then I think the question is straightforwardly answered. With defence being cheaper than offence, you can destroy the force size that the Soviet Union possesses today, and you can in principle deter the Soviet Union from multiplying it by a factor of ten, five, or any other number.

—But that must remain an untested proposition, perhaps for many years to come. How would you meet the critique of men like Hans Bethe and Richard Garwin (whose credentials, you would agree, are acknowledged, and include the achievement of the American H-Bomb) when they say this:

> **"On the basis of our technical analysis and our assessment of the most likely response of the Soviet Union, we conclude that the pursuit of the President's programme would inevitably stimulate a large increase in the Russian strategic offensive forces."**

KEYWORTH: I think that both Dr Bethe and Dr Garwin have carried forth the arguments that surrounded the ABM Treaty some ten or fifteen years ago. That was a very different era. It was far before the technology revolution that we're living in today.

We have seen and examined carefully a number of approaches that, we believe, offer us a very different opportunity—one that I do not believe they have addressed in detail. It goes back to that point of defence being cheaper than offence. If you can simply build more *defences* more cheaply than you can build more *offences*, then the ballistic missile is essentially an obsolete weapon. I'll go so far as to say that I think we can demonstrate the feasibility of this endeavour even before this decade is out.

—Doesn't this mean that the Soviet Union has to accept your version of what is expensive, what is costly?

KEYWORTH: Fortunately, I'm a scientist and not an accountant. Most certainly, when I talk about "cheaper" I'm not talking about 10%—not even a factor of two. I'm talking about such an *overwhelming* difference in the cost of defence and offence that there would be no question on that issue. Let me offer an example. One of the approaches that we are pursuing is of a very large, very powerful, ground-based laser, which could penetrate the atmosphere and which could, perhaps, emanate 10-to-20 pulses per second, or 600-to-1,200 hundred pulses per minute. Each of these pulses could destroy a ballistic missile.

In other words, one laser (which we believe could be built within quite a reasonable cost) could, in principle, defend the West against the entire Soviet ballistic-missile fleet today. We are not talking about marginal balances. We're talking about radically new technologies.

SCEPTICAL AND INFORMED critics maintain that SDI is of a different order of difficulty than anything so far within human technological accomplishment. But a "star warrior" like Dr Keyworth recalls the precedents for such apostasy. A renowned predecessor of his, as Science Adviser, told President Truman in 1945 that the ballistic missile would never possess the reliability or the accuracy to make it a significant weapon. In the British case, Professor F. A. Lindemann told Churchill the same thing about Hitler's *V2*, and (according to Edward Teller) in 1935 the great Lord Rutherford threw out of his office for "talking nonsense" a Hungarian scientist who tried to persuade him that the atomic nucleus and its fantastic energy had practical applications.

Teller himself points to the arguments which preceded development of the Hydrogen Bomb in America in the 1950s. It was opposed, partly on moral grounds, by Robert Oppenheimer and Hans Bethe (one of the opponents of "Star Wars" now) because, it was hoped, American restraint would encourage the Soviet Union to follow suit. But the Russians had already began to build it, as so soon was made clear. They detonated their first Hydrogen Bomb only six months after the Americans.

Today research in the area of strategic defence is part of the technological landscape. The informed American position is that the Russians have worked long and hard—and to an extent unknown in the West—to hedge against the offensive strategic missile. What, then, are the similarities and points of departure with that other revolutionary strategic development—the decision over the H-Bomb in the 1950s—as seen by the man who played a central role in it over 30 years ago?

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EDWARD TELLER: Let me first start with the contrast. My opponents at that time argued against the Hydrogen Bomb, using the emphatic statement that the Hydrogen Bomb was "*too terrible.*" Today the opponents (in remarkably many cases the very same people, in spite of the long time-span) now say that defensive weapons will make atomic war look "*less terrible*" and therefore more probable! We almost seem to have changed sides. I can accuse them of inconsistency; they can accuse me of inconsistency; yet, from another point of view, both sides have been consistent. In both cases the opposition said: no new technology is possible. In both cases the proponents, including myself, said it was. In the present case, mostly on the basis of the work of younger colleagues, we assert—and I assert—that these new technologies *are* possible and hopeful. I am only 77 years old, and I am young enough to change my mind.

—But would it not be true to say that while you and your supporters have won the battle for public opinion and with Reagan's twice-elected Administration itself, you appear to have lost it with your fellow-scientists?

TELLER: We have not won it yet with the ancient ones whose mental inertia seems to surpass the inertia of any other known substance. I haven't given up hope. There are many problems. They say a "complete defence" is impossible. *Of course* it's impossible. War without risk, or peace without risk, or life without risk, is impossible. But to claim that defence is more risky than the present balance-of-terror—with lots of terror and hardly any balance at all? That I think, should sink in. I think the hope of *deterring* war by *defence* is our best hope. And in the very worst case—even though the consequence of war may be worse than anything we can remember, though perhaps not worse than anything recorded in history—defence might suffice to save some remnants of our civilisation.

I have lived with the fear of an atomic war for a little longer than 46 years, and I have never felt as hopeful as I feel now—because I see the light at the end of the tunnel. And I am no longer alone. Many of the young scientists are with us.

AND SO, 30 YEARS AFTER he became known as the father of the H-Bomb, Edward Teller issues the challenge of his own authority to the strategic axiom which the Bomb introduced—that the intrinsic superiority of defence cannot exist in our epoch. History suggests that where the prospect of military advantage exists, it is the Tellers of this world who will prevail. But there has been a considerable backing away from the more-or-less "complete" defence envisaged by President Reagan in his "Star Wars" speech—a shift which itself is almost a study in exegesis. After the speech, for some six months in 1983, the President ordered two studies of the concept of Strategic Defence: one to look into the technologies; the other to examine the policy implications in strategy (and Arms Control) for America and its allies. This second—for the most part, still classified—study was conducted by a team of advisers led by Fred Hoffman.

FRED HOFFMAN: The President used very general terms in that speech; and some of them clearly have to be viewed as Presidential rhetoric. I remember I worked for a President once when I was in the government, and in a speech he said that he was going to "eliminate poverty."

—Lyndon Johnson?

HOFFMAN: That was Lyndon Johnson, right. Nevertheless, President Reagan used one phrase that I think is worth remembering because it illustrates my view more or less precisely. He said he wanted to make nuclear weapons "impotent" and "obsolete." I think it's worth reflecting on the difference between those two terms. In my view, it is possible to work towards defences that may make at least *ballistic* missiles obsolete, and to have a reasonable prospect of getting to that conclusion long before the advance of defensive technology will be able to make nuclear weapons *impotent* (if indeed they ever can). The difference, I think, lies in the fact that for something to become *obsolete*, it doesn't need to be *impotent*. The crossbow is not impotent, yet it is obsolete as a weapon. It has been superseded because it's no longer militarily useful.

—But when you talk about "partial systems", or systems with more modest technical goals being more feasible than the full system, we should be in no doubt, should we, that you're walking away from the President's dream?

HOFFMAN: Yes and no. We, in our dreams, may dream that we can fly, and it's a pleasant sensation. Similarly, it would be very pleasant—and a better world, in my view—if we *could* become invulnerable to nuclear weapons. On the other hand, I do not believe that I'm "walking away" from the President's objective of *enhancing* deterrence, of getting a better and more suitable basis for deterrence, and of protecting the people, protecting civilians. There the key assumption is about the kind of attack that you believe it's necessary to protect against.

If you believe that the only defences that are worth having are those that will work against an attack in which the Soviet Union devotes the bulk of its forces to attacking *cities*, then indeed you need almost perfect defences in order to achieve a reasonable level of that objective. If you think that you're concerned about an attack in which the primary objective of the Soviet Union is to attack *military targets* (but in which they may, if they do it, inflict very large collateral damage), then I believe that much more moderate levels of defence capability can both deter the attack and protect the civilians.

One of the implications of successful ballistic missile defence may be that it makes obsolete the notion of massive nuclear attacks that attempt to lay waste a country. That is to say, it raises the question of selective attacks as the only nuclear option that may make sense. My own view, and this depends on the outcome of some technical questions, is that the way in which ballistic missile defences will be beaten—to the extent to which they may be beaten, and if they are beaten—will not be through "mass", through saturating them. I think, given likely attack objectives, it will turn out to

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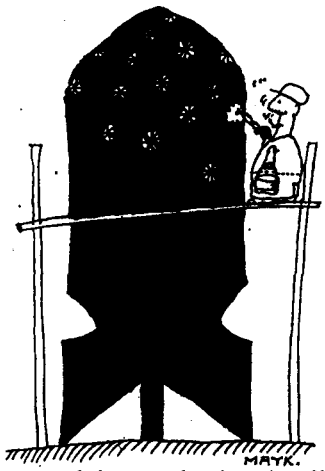
be prohibitive to simply try to saturate ballistic missile defences. I think if they're to be beaten, they'll have to be beaten qualitatively.



THE PROPONENTS OF SDI believe that, in the long run, Fred Hoffman's analysis mitigates or disposes of Robert McNamara's contention to the Russians in the 1960s (which became the basis of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty): that to attempt "defence" would lead only to more and more strategic missiles to overwhelm that defence. Today the "Star Warriors" see the Strategic Defence Initiative as both the means and the incentive to compel those reductions in offensive missiles which were supposed to follow in the wake of the ABM Treaty, more than a decade ago, and which Arms Control has not been able to achieve.

But McNamara's more fundamental point was the futility of the pursuit of advantage in the age of the absolute weapon. And this is the challenge of "Star Wars." While the President's vision of "defending populations" has not been disavowed, Fred Hoffman makes obvious the incompatibilities between the near- and the long-term issues posed by Strategic Defence. In the beginning, by the defence of weapons and military installations (it is argued), it will enhance nuclear deterrence. But in the end, space-based defences, if successful in defending populations, will eliminate the need for deterrence. Concerning nuclear deterrence, can the SDI have it both ways?

Thucydides, the historian of the Peloponnesian War who "set down nothing but facts", decided that what made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear that this caused in Sparta. President Nixon, on taking office and arguing for the ABM Treaty, echoed that ancient concern.

> **"While I would like to provide the American people with complete protection against nuclear attack, it is not now within our power to do so. . . . It might look to an opponent like the prelude to an offensive strategy threatening the Soviet deterrent."**

How is the transition from the present reality to the President's vision to take place?

The voices which are in the ascendant in the American strategic debate today speak differently to this issue than their counterparts in the 1960s. Among the most influential of them on American nuclear policy has been Senator Henry Jackson's aide (who drafted much of the Senator's early opposition to the SALT agreements). Richard Perle is now Assistant Secretary of Defence.

—Should both the United States and the Soviet Union move toward strategic defence?

RICHARD PERLE: I believe the United States should move to a strategic defence. The situation is a little bit different for the Soviet Union whose offensive forces, whose technology and technology base, strategic doctrine and objectives are all, in my view, quite different. But I think it is most unwise for us to compete with the Soviet Union in an area where they have considerable advantages.

With respect to the continuing production of offensive forces, in particular land-based ballistic missiles, the Soviets have enormous advantages. They can move missiles freely about the Soviet Union; the land-mass over which they can move them is many times larger than the United States. They don't have to worry about safety and security with respect to terrorists (as we do), and so it is easy and relatively efficient for them to go on adding offensive nuclear missiles to their

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inventory. It's far more difficult for us to do that. We by contrast have, I believe, long-term technological advantages, based not on the current state of our knowledge about Strategic Defence (because we are behind the Soviet Union today), but because we have a much richer technological base upon which to draw. It makes sense, in my view, to compete with the Soviets where we are strongest, on *our* playing-field; and not where we are weakest, on *theirs*.

—But wasn't the historical precedent for treating the SDI as a bargaining counter, as leverage, already established with the 1972 Agreement, the history of the ABM defence? Are you saying the SDI programme should be protected? Or should we see it as another go round the same circuit as in the 1970s, where the sacrifice of this no doubt very substantial pawn would produce a new equilibrium and a new hope?

PERLE: You've put the question in a provocative way—it seems to suggest that far from learning from the experience of 1972, we will simply repeat it. In 1972 the American ABM system was one that we were capable of deploying. It was regarded as a "bargaining chip" because it was believed that we could obtain from the Soviet Union limitations on their offensive forces that would obviate the requirement for an American defence.

Two things have happened since. One is that the Soviet forces grew beyond even our most pessimistic expectations under the terms of the 1972 Agreement. So the objective of obviating the requirement for a defence was not reached. Secondly, to add insult to injury, the Soviets recognised in 1972 that they were behind the United States in defensive technology and they greatly increased their investment in defensive technology. The result is that today they are in a position to deploy an anti-ballistic missile defence of roughly the same technology that we were looking at in 1972—and we are not.

RICHARD PERLE's opinion that the Americans should compete with the Soviet Union on the ground where they are strongest, i.e. in technology, conforms to the analysis made more than a century ago by Alexis de Tocqueville of the then emerging two great powers. Tocqueville saw their struggle as one between "dominion over nature" and "dominion over people." The American, he said, struggles against the obstacles of nature, the adversaries of the Russian are men. The former combats the wilderness, the latter civilisation. The principle of the American is "freedom", of the Russian "servitude." Ever since the Second World War the West has sought to defend itself by technological superiority rather than the huge conventional armaments at the disposal of a permanently mobilised society like the Soviet Union. The scientific initiative for a Strategic Defence lies in the path of that history.

Whether the President's SDI defence is negotiable with the Russians in return for the "deep cuts" in missiles which they refused President Carter—President Reagan says it is not negotiable—whether it will, in the end, be the impulse which allows Sisyphus to push the Arms-Control boulder up the hill once more, has brought us to the current controversy and it will dominate summit meetings in the years to come.

In an earlier article in this series, Gerard Smith (head of the American delegation to the 1972 SALT talks which resulted in the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty) recalled the "sigh of relief" with which Britain and France saw the signatures fixed to that Treaty. Limiting ballistic missile defence made valid the "independent deterrent threat" of the smaller British and French nuclear forces. It was part of the remit given by President Reagan to Fred Hoffman's team of experts that they also examine the consequences of "Star Wars" for the British and French deterrents.

FRED HOFFMAN: It was clear that questions were going to arise about the implications of SDI for national nuclear forces. And they have indeed arisen. Questions would also arise with regard to the viability of the "strategy of selective response"—selective offensive response in the presence of defences. However, both those issues involve an implicit assumption, and I think it is absolutely crucial. The assumption is that if the United States *abstains* from the pursuit of ballistic missile defences, the Soviets will *also* abstain indefinitely. It's clearly not the American defences that threaten the national nuclear forces or that threaten the policy of "selective response." It is the Soviet defences that do that.

—What conclusion did you come to about the implications this had for the small European deterrent forces?

HOFFMAN: I think the SDI doesn't have any very direct implications for the small nuclear forces. It may, at the margin; that is to say, the results of SDI might move a Soviet decision to deploy ballistic missile defences forward or backward some years in time; but, in my view, if there exists in nature a relatively effective set of technologies for ballistic missile defences waiting to be discovered, the Soviets will discover them sooner or later, and they will deploy them. It seems to me that it's possible to argue the effect of SDI, on that particular front, in either direction.

If you believe that in the absence of any significant effort on the part of the United States, the Soviets might have greater incentives to abrogate the ABM Treaty at some point than they otherwise would, then in effect SDI (by providing deterrence to such an abrogation) would presumably assist in maintaining the effectiveness of smaller nuclear forces.

If it has the reverse effect, if it leads the Soviets to believe that they have nothing to lose, then it would precipitate the problem sooner than it otherwise would. But, either way, it seems to me that the basic issue—so long as the United

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Kingdom and France maintain the national decision to keep national nuclear forces—is one of cooperation with regard to the objectives of those forces and their technical support. And there one of the functions of SDI will be to give a better understanding of what it will take to attempt to penetrate ballistic missile defences. There is an avenue for cooperation, if it's judged to be in the mutual interest.

—But would you agree that, historically, American thinking about this has not always been consistent? There has been support for the "second centre of decision" in the Nixon Administration; not much before that. Robert McNamara (in his Athens speech in the 1960s) was quite opposed to it.

HOFFMAN: I must confess to not having been an enthusiast for national nuclear forces.

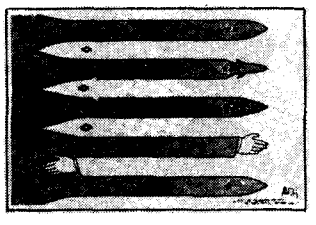
—Because it complicates the American position?

HOFFMAN: It complicates the American position. And it diverts resources from what we believe were higher Alliance uses.

BOTH GREAT POWERS are set on a path of research and development which could carry them beyond the strategic capabilities of the individual nation-states of Western Europe. And should that situation arise it would be unique in the nuclear age. The open-ended possibilities of Strategic Defence are of obvious European interest, and of special concern to Britain and France as nuclear powers.

How that concern and those interests have been addressed in the past, and their relevance now, is the subject of my final section.

6. *Europe & America: Reconciled Among the Stars?*



PRESIDENT REAGAN'S concept of a Strategic Defence Initiative has widened the range of possibilities and uncertainties which surround Western Europe. The evidence so far suggests that it has presented the Soviet Union with a thoughtful and compelling challenge. It has also concentrated the minds of America's allies, whose responses have seemed to be divided between fascination and fright.

The ambition of Strategic Defence in the end is to substitute "assured survival" for the present nuclear reality of assured destruction—based upon the threat of retaliation in kind. Among the arguments put forward in support of "Star Wars" has been that it is unreasonable to suppose that any system of security, including nuclear deterrence, can function at all times and endure for decade after decade. The remark from another epoch, of England's "gloomy dean", Dean Inge, concerning the Gadarene swine—"No doubt they felt the going was good for the first half of the way"—is reflected in President Reagan's persuasion that the threat of mutual annihilation is at once morally wrong and increasingly unstable.

Where, then, do the principal European concerns arise? We must turn to European political leaders who have dealt with strategic nuclear choices in the past.

The eventual goal of the "Star Wars" initiative is to create defences so strong that there can be no assurance that ballistic missiles could overwhelm them. Ever since the first Soviet intercontinental rocket, put an end to the privileged immunity of the homelands of the United States, America has shared the risks of nuclear war with its allies in Western Europe. Inevitably, "strategic defence" raises doubts about the equality of that shared risk in the future. For if the Soviet Union were to follow suit, and make a success of its own active research and development of a "Star Wars" defence, it would mean a Russia freed from the deterrent threat of nuclear reprisal and, it's argued, a Europe made safe for conventional war.

President Reagan's vision of an America defended from space against nuclear ballistic missiles departs fundamentally from the expressed principal purpose of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 which, opting for MAD, abandoned the idea of "strategic defence."

The British nuclear deterrent, on 24-hour patrol beneath the oceans, is directly linked in a causal relationship to the limited defences which the ABM Treaty permits. Exercising an option which the Americans did not take up for Washington, the Russians since the 1960s were the first to deploy, and have constantly modernised around Moscow, a treaty-limited system of ballistic missile defence. Britain, in reply, has made the costly improvement of the *Chevaline* warhead to its *Polaris* missiles to assure the threat of British retaliation in the face of those limited defences. For a small deterrent force, *Chevaline* and the ABM Treaty were both judged necessary to make the British deterrent credible rather than seeming a mere national military eccentricity. This was the advice given to successive British governments by the Chief Scientific Adviser of the time, Professor Sir Hermann Bondi.

HERMANN BONDI: The British deterrent, as it existed until a few years ago, would not have been able to count on getting through to the Moscow area. The advice clearly had to be that if our force was targeted on Moscow, it was quite likely—not certain, but quite likely—to be ineffective.

—So the bearing that the Soviet defence—the modernisation of

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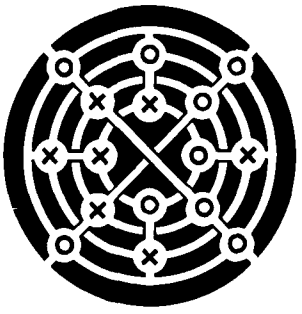
the Russian ballistic missile defence system around Moscow—has had on the modernisation of our own nuclear deterrent is clear. There is a direct link.

BONDI: There is, of course—on the basis of the political attitude to what we might call "the Moscow criterion."

—Can you say why it is that the British have dedicated the nuclear deterrent to the city of Moscow, the so-called "Moscow criterion"?

BONDI: For us to resign ourselves to have a capability that is not only quantitatively small but qualitatively second-rate

"Neophobia", or the Fear of Space Defence



THE REASONABLE **conclusion to any objective assessment of the SDI is that it offers a real possibility of substantial reductions in nuclear arms without the accompanying dangers of instability; a decreased dependence upon the threat of suicidal retaliation as the only deterrent against aggression; and a reduction in the chances of a successful conventional attack on Western Europe, and by extension of the Soviet Union's contemplating such an attack. It is a matter for regret that the initiative has been greeted by a campaign of hostile rhetoric—much of it particularly ill-informed—and by a predictable demand for unilateral concessions on the part of the United States in order to avoid provoking the Soviet Union.**

THIS IS NOT *to suggest that the SDI in isolation will solve the problems of international security. It must go hand-in-hand with a continuing dialogue with the Soviet Union, designed not to freeze the nuclear arsenals at existing levels, but to extricate both sides, and, indeed, the rest of the world, from the threat of nuclear war. This will, however, be a long and painful process. We should not suppose that suspicion between two irreconcilable political philosophies will evaporate overnight, nor that the Soviet Union's foreign and military policies will be dramatically modified by the current Arms Control negotiations.*

One of the most disturbing aspects of these negotiations has been the near-euphoria which they have engendered in the West, with otherwise thoughtful people talking about "a new warmth in East-West relations" and "a new era in Arms Control." The Reagan Administration has been at pains to discourage unwarranted public expectations, for example, by releasing to Congress documents listing the Soviet Union's violations of past Arms Control agreements. (See "The President's Unclassified Report to the Congress on Soviet Non-Compliance with Arms Control Agreements", Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, Washington, D.C.) President Reagan himself has warned that the new negotiations may well outlast his own Administration. Clearly, there is a long way to go and the road is likely to be a dangerous one.

IN THE CURRENT CLIMATE **of confrontation, it is essential, if somewhat irritating to those of a more idealistic persuasion, that we should continue to concern ourselves deeply with the effective defence—including the military defence—of the West against the external threat; and this tends to reflect the need for some radical new strategic thinking. In much of the uproar about the SDI, it has been possible to detect a high degree of *neophobia*, a morbid or irrational fear of anything new or unfamiliar.**

A LARGE PART *of the strategic debate about defence and deterrence in the West is carried on within the framework of two obsolete and discredited concepts—"Mutual Assured Destruction" on the one hand, and Flexible Response (or "graduated deterrence") on the other. It cannot be right to contemplate in perpetuity a deterrent policy which depends upon a readiness to inflict millions of casualties on the civilian population of the enemy, in the certain knowledge that similar devastation will be inflicted on our own cities.*

FURTHERMORE, **the SDI, which is designed to supplant this concept, cannot be considered in isolation from the doctrine of graduated response in Europe. It has always seemed extremely improbable that there could be some controllable process of escalation in a European war, with an orderly progression from conventional weapons to battlefield nuclear weapons, thence to intermediate-range missiles, and only in the final spasm to an exchange of strategic warheads. Nor is there much conviction in the arguments of those who, whilst believing that no such orderly process is likely, argue that it is the very uncertainty that deters the Soviet Union from attack, and that the various nuclear systems are part of what is sometimes romantically described as the "seamless fabric of deterrence."**

WHAT HAS HAPPENED *as a result of persistent adherence to this doctrine is that NATO's conventional defences have been allowed to deteriorate to an alarming level and the nuclear threshold to become dangerously low. It is true that the threat of an irrational response* **may** *turn out to be an effective deterrent. But if it turns out* **not** *to be, and the Soviet Union decides, in some contingency as yet unforeseen, to launch a conventional attack, the NATO allies will very rapidly be faced with the choice of either using nuclear weapons or conceding large areas of Europe.*

In the event that they choose the first option, there is no reason to suppose that the Soviet Union will observe any precise rules of escalation. Its response is just as likely to be strategic as tactical—if, indeed, those words have any real significance in this context. In effect, the President of the United States will be faced at once with the need to take a decision which might involve a nuclear strike against his own cities; and in the present context of "Mutual Assured Destruction" that would, presumably, be the apocalypse.

It is not a convincing or credible defensive posture.

SPACE HAS ALREADY **had a significant impact on military strategy. It will inevitably continue to do so, and it would be wise for the military planner to take account of this new dimension. This will not be done if our only reaction to the Strategic Defence Initiative is to try to shoot it down with arguments derived from discredited strategic doctrines and outmoded habits of strategic thought.**

Alun Chalfont

LORD CHALFONT'S *pamphlet on "SDI: The Case for the Defence" is published by the Institute for European Defence & Strategic Studies in London. His article "The Great Unilateralist Illusion" is available as an ENCOUNTER pamphlet (No. 13, £1.00/$1.50, plus 50p./$1.00 for postage).*

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would severely diminish the political effect within the Alliance of having a deterrent at all. So "the Moscow criterion" goes rather far. It's rather important, in the context of Alliance politics.

As far as "the other side" is concerned, one is of course talking of a highly centralised system, centralised in a manner we can hardly imagine. No doubt they will take precautions. They have taken certain precautions—but the enormous importance of Moscow in the Soviet Union is quite clear. So abandoning "the Moscow criterion" would be a very severe reduction in what one might call "the quality of the deterrent" and its prime task of helping to keep the peace.

EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN particularly reluctant to forsake historical positions linking security with national sovereignty, but, as Sir Hermann Bondi makes apparent, the prospect of "Star Wars" defences has implications for both.

For almost half-a-century, since the feasibility of an Atomic Bomb was demonstrated, Britain has been involved in making nuclear weapons and has shown itself, under all post-War British governments, determined to maintain an independent nuclear deterrent. But it has not been consistent American policy that Britain should be assisted to do so. The history of what became the "interdependent nuclear relationship" with the United States is marked by episodes which amounted almost to the unilateral nuclear disarmament of Britain by her closest ally—which had a seismic effect on the Anglo-American political relationship. Since that time, Britain has taken a number of steps which emphasise her relationship with Europe, above all her membership of the European Community.

How is the issue presented by a possible move to strategic defence judged today—alongside those other strategic nuclear issues which arose in the past—by Edward Heath, the Prime Minister who took Britain into Europe and whose government took the decision to modernise the British nuclear deterrent?

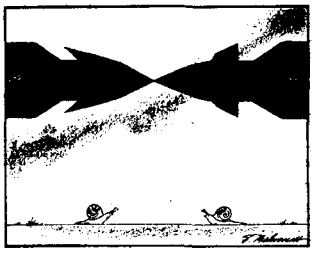
EDWARD HEATH: I suppose the first similarity one looks to is the joint work which was done during the Second World War on atomic developments, and then what Congress did directly after the War. Through the McMahon Act, Congress said that none of the information is to be available to the other powers who've taken part in this joint work. I think we ought to remember that lesson; it's a very hard lesson to learn.

Looking at it from our own point of view, certain familiar questions repeat themselves. If we take part in the Strategic Defence Initiative research and development, it means using a considerable part of our resources. What are we going to get out of it at the end? To all intents and purposes, nothing.

The Americans will keep control of any system which does come out of it; US commerce and US firms will keep control of any commercial advantages, and we in Europe shall get nothing. The deduction from that is one which I've made before, and that is that Europe must be looking after its own affairs in conjunction with an Alliance, but not subservient in an Alliance. That was, after all, the point of the British keeping their nuclear deterrent, and the reason why the French developed theirs. I proposed long ago (in 1967, I think it was) in my Godkin Lectures at Harvard, that the British and the French deterrent should be joined together. You could do it in a variety of ways, and I suggested one or two; but that has unfortunately never come about. But that's what I would like to have seen, and would still like to see today.

—Scientific performance and achievement have been inseparable from the Anglo-American special relationship. But would you agree that there's a gap between the United States and the United Kingdom which over the years has got wider and wider? It was a gap that was first obvious in this atomic field. There's been "Polaris"; "Trident" has a question mark against it because of its great cost; an SDI is quite beyond us as a nation-state. What questions do you feel that raises?

HEATH: Of course the first instance which one goes back to is *Skybolt*, which had been promised to us by the United States and was then discarded by President Kennedy. They really proposed to put nothing in its place, which would have left us without any defence at all in the nuclear field. It was only after very long arguments between Harold Macmillan and President Kennedy (and I think the Prime Minister's personal influence with the President really decided that) that we did in fact get the *Polaris* submarine. That was under certain very rigid conditions; but we did maintain the position that in the event of our deciding it was our own national emergency, then we would have the use of it. So the present situation does lead back to that question: Ought we not to develop our own resources so that we are not entirely dependent in that way on the decision, not necessarily of the Administration, but of the Congress?



IN THE 30 YEARS since the Messina Conference of 1955 founded the European Community, the states of Western Europe have had the time to pursue joint foreign, security, and defence policies. They have made small headway. Edward Heath's advocacy of a special relationship with the Community—to complement what he considered to be the natural relationship with the United States—is a step over which his successors have shown themselves to be more hesitant.

Back in 1962, when *Skybolt* was cancelled, it was seen by Harold Macmillan and his Ministers as an American attempt to contrive the end of the independent British nuclear deterrent. It was US policy to encourage the integration of the British and French deterrents in a multinational force within NATO and under US control. That this is still a theme, at least in American considerations, was apparent from Fred Hoffman (who led one of President Reagan's teams of advisers on the consequences of "Star Wars" for Alliance politics):

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"I must confess to not being an enthusiast for national nuclear forces. . . ." In its possible effects, if not its intention, the "Star Wars" concept invites comparison with the dispute over the Multinational Force in the 1960s.

When Harold Macmillan persuaded President Kennedy to give Britain the *Polaris* submarine rather than explore nuclear collaboration with France, General de Gaulle considered that it dramatised a fundamental difference about the future. He vetoed Britain's first attempt to join the European Community, and it is also a reason why there are two national nuclear forces in Europe today.

The SDI and its Soviet counterpart give warning of the possible obsolescence of the independent nuclear deterrents of Britain and France, and thus mitigate their deterrent threat. How, this time, might Britain and France face a prospect created by the SDI (*IDS* to the French) which they last confronted in 1962?

Maurice Couve de Murville was General de Gaulle's Foreign Minister, and is still a guardian of the General's pervasive "Gaullist" legacy.

MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE: In principle, we could believe now that if this SDI comes to work in the Soviet Union after the United States, it will be a defence against the strategic weapons that the British and the French have built and that are directed against the Soviet Union. In other words, our nuclear submarines. It is possible, and (believing what we are being told now) it is even probable, that we should have to review the system—in order to have a nuclear defence capable of continuing to be a threat to the Soviet Union, in spite of the new defences that the Soviet Union is going to build.

—When it comes to the possible development of a "European personality"—a "European Europe" in defence matters—is British failure in the past to do more in cooperation with France in these nuclear matters an impediment to that?

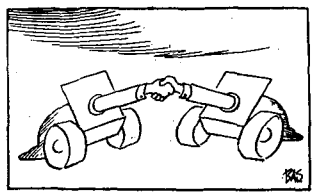
COUVE DE MURVILLE: The only answer, I think, is that we shall see. It's very difficult at present, not knowing exactly what the SDI is all about, to say what kind of cooperation could exist between the United Kingdom and France. You see in the past what the obstacle was: that you, the British, had a choice to make between the French and the Americans—and you made the choice of the Americans. Nobody can say if in two, or five, or ten years you will not have the same choice to make, whether the Americans will not ask you to work deeply with them in this SDI business.

—May I quote something from your memoirs? We know that you told President Kennedy in May 1963 that nuclear cooperation with the United Kingdom was "not a practical possibility" but it was "not ruled out in principle." Would you give the same answer today?

COUVE DE MURVILLE: Yes. I think it's not a practical system since the United Kingdom and the United States have close cooperation between them on that. If the conditions are changed, and if there is a common interest on both sides, in London and in Paris, then I don't see any reason why we shouldn't envisage a kind of cooperation between the French and the British in that field, as well as later on the SDI itself.

—But, if that choice is faced again, do you believe the situation has evolved in any important way? After all, the British are now a member of the European Community.

COUVE DE MURVILLE: Yes, I think to some extent the situation has changed. The British are closer to the Europeans since they are in the Common Market. And we are also much further from the War, and the War had been the closest cooperation between the British and the Americans. Twenty years ago, the spirit of that cooperation was still very much alive.



THE FORMER FRENCH Foreign minister confirms the likelihood that the SDI will raise, from the British point of view, another assessment of where the future of the Anglo-American relationship lies. Is it to be in deeper British participation in Europe, or in a degree of American-British exclusivity? It is apparent that once more Britain will face a choice.

Among the greatest of Europe's achievements since World War II has been the reconciliation of France and Germany. This has been the motor of European unity. Two years ago, the West German Chancellor from 1974-1982, Helmut Schmidt, concluded that new steps had to be taken if Western Europe were to remain a vital economic area. He called for a joint German and French industrial programme, and suggested that West Germany help to pay for the expanded conventional armament of France, and that France consider extending her nuclear guarantee to cover West Germany. The former Chancellor has argued strongly against participation by the West German government in the "Star Wars" programme.

—In deciding that the SDI challenge should be met by new steps towards a European unity of purpose, to what extent do you consider that defence cooperation will become closer than hitherto between France and Germany?

HELMUT SCHMIDT: Not only as a consequence of SDI. I have been an advocate of close cooperation between the French and the Germans for almost twenty years. I was born and raised as an Anglophile. But I was disappointed by British policies *vis-à-vis* Europe and the EEC in its early stages. I then came to think that the power and the leadership of the United States were inevitable. Later on (and I'm now 67), over 30 years as an active and operative political animal, I did understand that the interests of the Germans would be served best in close cooperation with the French. Or in other words, all that the Germans desire—for instance, an honoured place in the international society; a normal relationship with the

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nations in Eastern Europe; the desire of ultimately getting the two parts of Germany together again (or, at least, to get the two parts of the German nation under one and the same roof again)—can only happen, if ever, in so far as it is accepted by the French. The French acceptance of German strategic goals is the necessary legitimation; without that legitimation, it could never happen. An American legitimation doesn't work in Europe. A British legitimation may work, but it isn't that worthwhile. A French legitimation is what really matters.

—And, therefore, an unconditional alliance with France is indispensable, as you see it, to the future of Europe?

SCHMIDT: I wouldn't subscribe to the word "unconditional." I wouldn't even in marriage subscribe to such a qualification. But an alliance with France, yes. And this would then, of course, also have to include specific hard core cooperation in the military and defence field. Yes.

—But isn't having something like the SDI on the agenda a potentially vast new dimension which might cause us to revise all the horizons of strategic thinking so far? Do you think the question of how to extend French deterrence to Germany is likely to arise again under this kind of pressure, as it did with Adenauer and de Gaulle, for example, in the 1960s?

SCHMIDT: It is not very likely, but the likelihood is growing in France. Extending the area which is to be defended by the nuclear *force de frappe* is something which the French think is very important, but they have grave hesitations to do so although the hesitation is withering a little. But, from a German point of view, this is more a psychological thing than a thing of military importance.

—Are future developments in this respect likely to include new kinds of responsibilities for the Federal Republic of Germany?

SCHMIDT: I hope not, I hope not. It would be detrimental to Germany's interest if Germany could be accused of taking up a role in the nuclear field. It should not do so.

—But would that rule out a possible sharing of certain systems under "double key arrangements"?

SCHMIDT: No. "Double key arrangement" is something different again. "Double key" may mean a sort of competence to say no, not necessarily a competence to say yes.

THE NEW GERMAN ENTHUSIASM for defence cooperation with France, exemplified by Helmut Schmidt, has been answered by a French willingness to discuss a larger number of nuclear issues than at any previous time, and it is evidence of a political shift in France towards entertaining a closer military collaboration with Germany. In this sense, the basis for a new combination in the centre of Europe exists.

Within the Community, where she has still really to establish her political place, the pressure, therefore, grows on Britain to declare her hand in the development of a European defence personality. Should it take the form of "institutionalising a difference" with the United States? This poses an old problem as far as Britain is concerned—the relationship between Europe and America as a whole.

EDWARD HEATH: The strain in Europe comes if France and Germany appear to be trying to run the Community on their own—or developing in new directions, including defence and procurement, without jointly working with the other countries. Our problem will be if we're not prepared to go wholeheartedly with them in Europe in the field of procurement and defence. My view is a very clear one: we should be prepared to go wholeheartedly with Europe in both of those fields.

—How is America going to like it? Isn't that a crucial question?

HEATH: Well, you can't judge international affairs on whether you like it or not. President Kennedy said to me in 1962: "My view of the Atlantic Alliance is of two tall equal pillars, one on each side of the Atlantic." "But", I said, "you are a tall pillar—a strong pillar—and we in Europe are a short and rather shaky pillar." He said: "Yes, but I want Britain in—for that very reason—to make a tall, strong pillar in Europe. And that will be an Alliance."

—Let me quote what you said in your Godkin Lectures in the 1960s.

> **"I do not myself think it realistic to suppose that defence will be excluded indefinitely from the European experiment. . . . It is unlikely that after spending so much money and skill either Britain or France will simply allow their nuclear forces to wither away and return to complete reliance on the United States deterrent. The idea of a European defence system might prove highly attractive to them."**

In the light of the Strategic Defence Initiative, which in the opinion of many would mitigate the idea of a small deterrent force, how does that issue of the two deterrent forces present itself when it comes to talking about "a European defence personality"?

HEATH: My argument is that we ought to do everything possible to get an agreement about the non-establishment of SDI forces between the two superpowers, and between the rest of us for that matter. Then, of course, the predicament is not as great as it might at first sight appear. Because what I'm saying is that we in Europe *must* maintain our nuclear forces. The French have got their own resources for producing it without any American assistance. It may be that—in the past, through various ways—they did get American knowledge and help, but it is their own force. As far as we are concerned, we are capable of providing basic essentials of that force ourselves; and we could, if necessary, develop our own way again. I think it's very necessary that Europe must maintain its own force, that some of the countries in Europe maintain that force.

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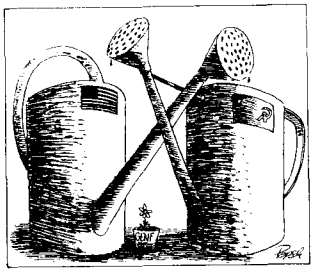
Of course, there was always the argument about Germany being involved in it, and it was said that Germany would then have its "finger on the trigger." That was never the proposal. It would mean that Germany could have its finger on the safety-catch the whole time; but nobody would be able to have their finger *alone* on the trigger.

—Do you see, as one possible series of developments, the idea of "double key arrangements" which would mean there would be a development in German defence policy?

HEATH: That's certainly possible. I think we've got to ask people to be more rational about these things 40 years after the Second World War, and look to the future and the defence of the Continent as far as the Soviet bloc is concerned.



THE HISTORY OF past efforts at military integration, like the European Defence Community of the 1950s, does not suggest encouraging precedents. But sovereignty is where sovereignty lies. A new debate has only just begun. The extent to which concepts like "Star Wars" will further modify the prejudices of the nation-states of Western Europe, whether they will continue to stand on the ancient ways that made for safe advance, remains difficult to predict.

The overwhelming case for the British deterrent, accepted by all British governments in the past, has been Sovereignty, in the last resort. If the men in the Politburo thought the Americans might not come to the aid of Europe—if there was a weak President, or an atmosphere of retreat in America—then the deterrent effect of American nuclear weapons would be useless. There follows the need for an independent deterrent, a second centre of decision, which in effect would couple the United States to the defence of Europe.

In the new circumstances which arise if Strategic Defence looks more feasible, the arguments point different ways. If Soviet "Star Wars" defences grew, or the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty were abrogated, the case in Britain for the *Trident* submarine and its superior penetrating powers over the *Polaris* submarine would be strengthened. However, when *Trident* was discussed and decided upon by Britain, SDI was neither in prospect nor under consideration. If the strategic ballistic missile is indeed heading for obsolescence, it might be argued that Britain's defence effort should be concentrated on helping to create a greater *conventional* force in Europe. This is the real imbalance of power between East and West as Helmut Schmidt sees it.

HELMUT SCHMIDT: The Europeans have to understand that it is beyond their reach, by their own means, to come up with a sufficient counterweight against the Soviet strategic means of nuclear warfare. But the Europeans could come up with enough military power to balance off all the power that the Soviet Union could muster in the sub-nuclear fields.

And why don't they do it? What it needs is clarity in the minds of political leaders in Paris, in Bonn, and in some other places. What is missing most is clarity in the minds of the leaders—not the number of study groups or academic symposia. We've had enough of them!

—What should be the political aim of such an endeavour? Would it be to forestall divergence from the United States, or to prepare for it?

SCHMIDT: No. Neither. You know, "divergence between Europe and the USA", or "crisis in NATO"—I've heard this over almost 35 years. I do not see any basic danger for the cohesion of the military alliance. What I do see right now is a diversion of strategic thinking, and an enormous lack of leadership by the leaders.

—But this gap in strategic thinking has been opened up. How important is it, in your view, to close it?

SCHMIDT: It would be important to close it. It could be closed partially by an act of will in Paris. Basically and comprehensively it can only be closed by the Americans.

—How could it be "closed in Paris"?

SCHMIDT: If, for instance, a French President would come to the decision that his forces and German forces should join each other—and that (in order to decorate it, psychologically) he would extend the area of defence for his *force de frappe* towards the River Elbe or something like that. This would do most of the trick. If on top of all that he would also make it clear that, although France will retain its own nuclear strategic force, nevertheless it is willing to acknowledge the necessity of the Americans to maintain the overall strategic balance with Soviet strategic forces, this would be enough. But it takes an act of will in Paris.

—Is a "specifically European" defence role conceivable to you, or useful?

SCHMIDT: Oh yes, oh yes, it is. Let's assume that the French and the Germans plus BENELUX join their forces. Let's assume also that some 35,000 British troops, if you so wish, join these forces. Put them all under French high command. It would work. It would make quite an impression on Marshal Ogarkov and on his successors, and it would have a greater deterrence effect than all this bloody nonsense about "Star Wars."

THESE ARE THE frustrations of a Western Europe reduced in political efficacy by its own incapacity, sceptical about the technical possibility of realising the President's dream, worried about its cost. The Western Alliance has celebrated 40 successful years and has ridden out all its storms. But these are the attitudes which reflect the

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long-term strains within it. They are concentrated today upon the growing economic divergence of Europe and America, and upon differing perceptions of the quality of the Soviet threat.

It is in this last field—the unique privileges of shared Intelligence, together with nuclear cooperation—that Britain enjoys that part of the "special relationship" with the United States that is left to her. Today America's special relationship, based on *power*, is with Germany. Concerning the Anglo-American special relationship, the former German Chancellor is almost dismissive. And, echoing Dicken's description of Mr Squeers in *Nicholas Nickleby*, Helmut Schmidt remarks that NATO has only one eye, when the popular prejudice runs in favour of two. . . .

HELMUT SCHMIDT: I have a very clear conviction. I have been cooperating with four American Presidents, one after the other, during my time, and with I don't know how many US Defence Secretaries, quite outstanding personalities among them. But the interpretation of what is in the strategic interest of the United States—or what is in the strategic interest of the West in general—has changed quite often. Due to the prevailing interpretation of the day, they manipulated their photographs by satellite photography. They manipulated the data that they had available, and arranged the presentations in a way that suited the prevailing strategic doctrine.

So I would like Europe to make itself as independent as possible as regards fact-finding. Europe ought to have its own monitoring satellites; and this we could easily do. Why don't we do it? We have all the technical and financial means. Why don't we do it? We ought to be *independent* from the different interpretations and from the selectivity with which we are being informed (by differing, by changing personalities, for instance, in the Pentagon, or in the CIA).

—Should the British be encouraged to sacrifice that element of the "special relationship" which is left to them, the nuclear and Intelligence relationship with the United States? Should we reconsider that, in favour of a Western European grouping in which we would carry less real weight than either West Germany or France?

SCHMIDT: I don't know. I think this is a question that from time to time comes up in London, but doesn't really bother the continental Europeans. The continental Europeans have the feeling that the so-called "special relationship" is indeed very special because it's a unilateral not a bilateral thing. The British talk of a special relationship, not the people in the White House. They only use that phrase when they come to visit Westminster. Otherwise it does not prevail in their feeling of the situation.

AMERICA AND BRITAIN continue to share a broad strategic common ground, but the special relationship reflected at the outset a reciprocal capacity. Britain's reduced military power and the slow but steady decline in its economic ranking lie at the heart of the shift in a relationship which is dictated by basic facts of power and interest. Britain faces severe financial problems in keeping the Rhine Army up to strength, in modernising arms and equipment for its forces, and in making the change to the new deterrent force built around the *Trident* submarine.

"Star Wars" dramatises the logic that Europe simply cannot go on doing, as nation-states, all that needs to be done. The Europeans live in the shadow of the last expansionist empire on their continent. Will their concern at the temptation the "Star Wars" technology might offer Americans—to seek freedom from that burden of "equal risk" which the Alliance imposes—make Defence the agent which reanimates the ideas of European unity?

EDWARD HEATH: I've long held that it is a necessity. It's an historical necessity. Will this itself recreate the momentum in the European Economic Community? I do not think so. I think that, to do that, we've got to carry the creation of the completely free market much further. But having recreated the momentum, then we shall have the means of carrying on further in the procurement and defence field in a way which I have described. So the two are interlocked.

—But when you add up in your own mind the possibilities the SDI moderates or advances, the new directions it's likely to confirm or deny, do you see the independence of Europe on the rise and "Atlanticism" in decline?

HEATH: I see Atlanticism in decline, but I can't say that I see Europe "on the rise." If one judges Atlanticism by practical achievements and not just by conference communiqués, then I've been dismayed by these past few years. But if one asks, is Europe taking a grip on the situation *because* of it, the plain truthful answer must also be: No, it isn't.

THE EUROPEANS HAVE rested their future for so long on the American nuclear guarantee that they've virtually given up certain primary responsibilities, at least for their own defence. The guarantee to Europe depended on an American nuclear ascendency over the Soviet Union, and this is in question today. Unless the Russians and Americans jointly agree to extend it, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty will expire before the end of this decade; but the new technical possibilities of a strategic defence exist (a defence of weapons first, and perhaps of populations later).

Contemporary history suggests that they will be energetically pursued. This must cast doubt on whether the ABM

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Treaty will be renewed. Europe, therefore, faces the prospects of a defence of the continental United States which was once abandoned—and an increase, in the short term, in Soviet offensive nuclear power. It is in this last respect that Helmut Schmidt considers the reasoning which prompted the Americans to take the initiative which led to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972.

HELMUT SCHMIDT: It seems to me that basically the ABM Treaty was (*1*) in the interests of the United States, and (*2*) to the same degree in the interests of the Soviet Union. It was also in the interests of the smaller nuclear powers like the United Kingdom, France, China. Limiting anti-ballistic missile defences to a small number of systems means that the relatively unsophisticated nuclear systems (of Britain, of France, of China) would retain their strategic values to some degree. If the ABM Treaty goes, then the importance of the *force de frappe* as well as of the British deterrent will diminish. No doubt of that.

—Victor Hugo said that there was no force more powerful in history than "an idea whose time has come." Is strategic defence against the intercontinental ballistic missile an idea whose time has come?

SCHMIDT: No, I don't think so. The idea had already been created in the 1960s under another less prestigious name, and I do not see a breakthrough forthcoming. In particular I do not see a situation in which the West has means for a strategic breakthrough, and the East has not. I do not think that the strategy of military balance will be toppled. If we give up that idea of "balance" it will also mean that we give up the idea of Arms Limitation as a whole. There is no future for Arms Limitation if somebody, be it in the Kremlin or be it in the White House, believes that he or she can make their country superior in the field of military arms to the other side. The idea of superiority will destroy the idea of Arms Limitation.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE principal reasons why the Europeans would prefer the Russians and Americans to reach a joint agreement on the future of the strategic relationship between East and West. It would release them from the rigours of the likely consequence of "Star Wars" defences—the cost of doing more about defending themselves. This is the gap—not one of choice but of performance—that one sees opening up between Europe and America, with the Americans ready for another advance which the Europeans cannot make themselves or match. The familiar New World belief of President Reagan in American technology shows more confidence in its capacity to deliver us from the nuclear threat than it does in the axiom that stability in the nuclear age will continue to be based upon mutual vulnerability.

EDWARD HEATH: The Europeans are not prepared to see a vast quantity of the Alliance resources poured into something which is going to lead to a further stage in the Arms Race—

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more resources poured into it by the Soviet Union. In fact, it does nothing whatever to increase our safety. The argument that if you have a defensive system, your safety is greater than with a deterrent system, falls to the ground immediately you realise that no defensive system can be entirely foolproof. Therefore you've still got to have the deterrent. And therefore from that point of view I think the argument is baseless. I can remember the fuss when Mr Baldwin said (I think in 1935): "Of course I cannot guarantee that no German bomber will get through to this country." Immediately the shouts went up, and he was accused of being an incompetent Prime Minister and the government were not looking after the defence of the country, and so on. He was speaking the absolute truth. Nobody could guarantee that no German bomber would get through to this country; and the same will be true with SDI.

Well, then, the answer is that this is not a new, brilliant lead into the safety of the world. It is, in fact, an enormous expenditure for armaments on top of a deterrent which already can destroy the world many many times over. And what is the point of that?

THUS THERE ARE powerful arguments to suggest that "Star Wars" will produce as great a controversy as any in the history of the Transatlantic Alliance.

It is more than a decade since Henry Kissinger drove out to the Politburo's private retreat at Zavidovo near Moscow to spend the night shooting wild boar with Leonid Brezhnev, the leader of Soviet Russia. He was the first and only Westerner to have been accorded the privilege; and it marked the high point of *détente*. Kissinger entertained the hope that the peace Brezhnev spoke of that night could become a genuine coexistence—that "the boar hound and the boar might pursue their pattern as before, but reconciled among the stars. . . ." But those who dominate the American strategic debate today believe that *détente*—and the American acceptance of parity in the strategic nuclear balance—emboldened the Russians to a more provocative opportunism.

President Reagan would find little to dispute in Churchill's judgment in the months before the first great negotiation with Stalin's Russia at Yalta.

"I have tried in every way to put myself in sympathy with these Communist leaders, but facts and force are the only realities they understand."

The Americans are trying to get the Russians to compromise in some critical areas. "Star Wars" is a risk. It is also an opportunity. The time has come to talk to the Russians about the future.

It is a platitude that there is a good deal of common ground. Neither side wants nuclear war or wishes to commit suicide, and (to balance the platitudes) neither side would accept defeat rather than *use* nuclear weapons. Therefore the corollary of the concept of "decisive battle", which the advent of nuclear parity has abolished, is Arms Control negotiations.

This history of the political debate in the West suggests that without a credible Arms Control policy the United States will find difficulty in retaining the support of its allies, and that the Congress will not vote for adequate Defence budgets to match the Soviet effort.

The Soviet Union appeared to have understood the decade of the 1970s, of SALT and the emerging *détente* with the United States, as, in essence, a licence to exercise their strengths in areas where they had been relatively weak. In that sense Arms Control agreements without restraints in political conduct have not contributed to peace.

The notion of a permanent Soviet adversary who is not defeatable, because the terms for that defeat would not be acceptable, yet whose Constitution—written by Lenin—means America harm, remains novel and uncomfortable. The evolution of the American debate reflects a fundamental unease: that "doing business" with a defined, explicit adversary is an unnatural activity.

To survey this unfolding debate in America from the 1970s into the '80s is to see also the growing suspicion that no matter how satisfactory Alliance defence looked to American eyes, the United States was dealing with an adversary who *did* see some utility in military advantage, even at the margins—as with Harold Brown's "When we build, they build—when we stop building, they build", during the Carter Presidency.

IT IS POSSIBLE to measure the strategic balance in many different ways. But as it has declined marginally against the West, the United States has been asking more and more of its strategic forces. This is directly relevant to the SDI. What, then, is the SDI's contribution? It could possibly be many things. President Nixon, who together with Mr Brezhnev called into being the first SALT agreement, has recently expressed his belief that strategic defence efforts are indispensable to Arms Control because "without the SDI the Soviet Union will have no incentive to limit its offensive missiles." The SDI can be designed to halt the retreat from "assured destruction" (which is to say that weapons *must* remain invulnerable and populations vulnerable). Yet if command control and leadership can be defended, it would seem to strengthen the nuclear deterrence system in place.

The Russians have to assume that the SDI is real. But they can also look at the calendar and see that there are several Presidential elections, and many Congressional elections, between now and the possibility of space-based defence of populations and homelands.

In 1986 we do not and cannot know. The dialogue is, therefore, sure to be protracted. What the Soviet Union *does* know is that it is at the beginning of an enduring, though not necessarily permanent, technological disadvantage in the highest of high-defence technology.

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Gavin Ewart

Shall I Die?

(A Critical Exercise)

Did the Bard try quite hard
when he wrote what they quote—
a new-found poem?
It is good? or dead wood?
Starched and stiff? Who knows if
scholars know 'em,
the true joy, Real McCoy,
and worthy of Shakespeare's great canon?
They attribute; he is mute.
So easily it might be by Anon!

Where the words fly like birds
some young ponce thinks they're nonce,
while others, snarling,
say the Muse would refuse
to undress—it's a mess—
or be Will's darling!
Suspicious doubt, O keep out!
The rooms in God's famous huge mansion
aren't reserved, nor yet deserved
by dabblers in dubious scansion!

The rights and wrongs of Shaker's songs!
He's so posh—but they're tosh
in several places.
Any fool, who's *not* choir school,
as you know, sings high and low—
your true love's graces
aren't much praised when this is raised
as sign of remarkable merit!
You don't remark "Oh, hark!"
when rabbits squeal loud at a ferret.

Dons explain "wind and rain"—
but *you* try "When that I
was and a little
tiny boy"! Grammar's joy
it is *not*, nor so hot!
No jot or tittle!
It *does* prove songs that move
rely on the music, and singing—
smooth nonsense can unnerve a man,
junk food can set dinner bells ringing!

"Cheeks", 'brows", "hair", "beyond compare",
and a "dove"? Words of love
frequent such lyrics.
Not just Will! Bad writers still
use them all, though talent's small,
in panegyrics.
Faded now—but, somehow,
in earlier days they were voguish.
Georgian Verse could immerse
a sex urge in terms then thought roguish.

It's bad enough, it's awful stuff;
by him, when young, what might be *sung*
did get written.
But stand aloof (there's no proof),
you must chew words that you
too fast have bitten!
And cheeks, instead of lips, are red!
While noses, like foreheads, can wrinkle!
And sure as eggs, from our legs
comes an unmistakable tinkle!

NOTE: The poem "Shall I die?" included in the "Bodleian MS Rawl poet 160" (its jovial nickname among scholars) was attributed to Shakespeare in or around 1630. Later commentators have not agreed. Malone, for example, the great 18th-century Shakespeare editor, seems not to have supported the attribution. Mr Gary Taylor, using computer analysis of the vocabulary, now claims that neologisms and parallels with existing work known to be by Shakespeare make it likely that the attribution is correct. One reason for doubting this, it has been pointed out, is the fact that love songs of c.1600 all share the same vocabulary (the vocabulary, roughly, derided in Shakespeare's famous Sonnet 130—"My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun"). The line "Suspicious doubt, O keep out!", in my second stanza, occurs in the original poem.

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K. W. Gransden

Getting Through

I saw your name by chance under a poem,
In someone's copy of a magazine I never take.
But it wasn't that poem made me write to you,
But one you wrote me in 1945,
The Year of the Bomb. I lost that poem,
Somewhere en route from then to now,
Then we lost touch.
So I owed you anyway,
And your name in print blew open the safe of memory.
I shivered with a sudden breeze of Idgar,
Stirring the heavy nights like gauze curtains
Across the hill, above the camp,
Where we ditched the army, defied the mozzies
Under the Indian sky tepid as tea.

Splendours and miseries of that old time!
O military necessity, squaddies' songs,
They're congreGAting
For me 'n' my girl.
Turbaned figures prowled the perimeters,
Charwallah called across sweaty charpoys,
And another voice, Hands off your cocks, lads.
If you've not had your sleep you've had your time.
Oh we're SAYing goodBYE to them ALL
As BACK to their BILlets they crawl
What time had any of us, that year when Truman
Made megadeath's first payment? Bone rotting through,
Silk-brown thighs spotted and ulcerous,
Worse than black death or sleeping sickness
Or what the lion-faced had, wandering like telephones
Through shit-spattered alleys clutching their Bibles.

Important in sticky shorts, we drove
Through medieval villages signposted
PLAGUE DO NOT STOP PLAGUE.
Trucks shuddered, children huddled
On dusty kerbsides, manning the miserable
Mango and cocoanut stalls.
Miles away
From those unvisitable shanties stood,
Stupidly grand, the Gateway to India,
Victoria Terminus, Juhu beach club
Where the white-laundered, powdered for prickly heat,
Drank their lime juice.
Then that world ended.
We'd had our time.

So I wrote to you (as I started by saying)
Care of the publishers of that little magazine,
Asking if you were you,
The you (I mean) I knew under your name.
You answered, said you were, and added this:
"You got through just in time.
Months to go? I'll be lucky to have twelve."

Well, of course, one hears of so many now.
One dropped on a hillside track like an October pear.
Treading the joyful heather, went in peace.
Another fell at the fifteenth hole, a windless Sunday.
They had to fetch the car, he'd meant to wash it
That afternoon. Another smashed
A squash ball, an unreturnable corner shot.
He won the point but didn't make the shower.
They had to clear his street clothes from his locker.
He must have thought, an hour from now,
I'll put them on again, ready for a pint.
What had their bodies done, or failed to do,
To be dropped like a discarded lover,
No explanation, not even the courtesy
Of the curtest nod, finality of finalities?
That joke of Joyce's seemed hilarious once,
"Expecting every moment to be his next",
But in our climate of catastrophe
A strict, extreme and ponderable text.

But all those coronaries and tumours came
Suddenly out of nowhere, bursting like angels
Or gunmen through the random doors of life,
Heartbeat upon heartbeat upon heartbeat
And then not.
You had some time
And write "I'm happy so long as I can read."
Months may be long enough or even weeks
To make the last act work. Time's like water:
You can't save it, but it's all our saving grace,
Heartbeat upon heartbeat upon heartbeat.
Sorry it took me so long to get through.

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ONE OF THE BUGBEARS and temptations of recent years has been the green-necktie school of contemporary historiography. I'm sure you know the style:

> "The Seiko Secondmaster on the bony inside left wrist of burly, redheaded, 37-year-old security chief Dwight W. Lexton was showing 2.47.58 Eastern Standard Time as the President stepped into the fitful March sunshine from Air Force One. He was wearing an apple-green necktie of shot silk which contrasted piquantly with the sober blue lightweight suit and the soft cream executive shirt. His gray eyes twinkled under the heavy black eyebrows that every cartoonist loved. He had lunched well on the short 72-minute flight over the Adirondacks: avocado vinaigrette, baked crab on the half-shell, and the strawberry milk jello that had become mandatory when Dr Mulzheimer had first avoided the word 'ulcer'. . . ."

Nothing's about to happen, you understand. No "assassin's bullet", as green-necktie writers put it; no burst ulcer ("his face contorted with the stab of pain"). Not even a Ford-like stumble when crossing the tarmac to the ("gleaming black Presidential") limo. It's just that we have to pore over every detail: there are 400 pages before he's through his first term.

It makes a change, of course, from old-fashioned schoolbook history, all "phases" and "factors" and neat plans of battles, all stuffed with the dates when various thugs "subjugated" their enemies, "invested" cities, and put their victims "to the sword." Green-necktie writing isn't *History*—it's television, written down.

I said it's a temptation. One of my own books has been accused of describing too many moustaches. But I think I'm cured now. Not by a surfeit of exciting pulp fiction—the Ludlum-Archer-Forsyth course of treatment so often prescribed for green-necktie sufferers. Not by prayer and vows of narrative chastity. Not even by ridicule. What finally put me off any fascination with trivia was British press treatment of "the Westland affair."

Is a reminder needed? Hardly, but here goes. Small British helicopter company, in the red, seeks rescue. Some Ministers, including those of Defence and Trade & Industry, are said to favour a European link-up; the Westland board, now headed by a determined "company doctor", prefers a deal with Sikorsky, part of the giant US United Technologies. The official Government line, true to non-interventionist doctrine, is "Hands off." The Secretary of State for Defence wins grudging authority to see if he can encourage a European consortium: he can and does. Trade & Industry, meanwhile, seems to have changed tack against him; and a meeting he thought was arranged to discuss his project with fellow-Ministers is called off. He thereupon resigns, accusing the Prime Minister of browbeating the Cabinet. He reveals that his Trade & Industry colleague has tried to warn off a British participant in the European consortium. Prevarication follows about the precise terms of the warning, about correspondence concerning it, and about another letter, "leaked" by the Trade & Industry Department with "cover" from civil servants in the Prime Minister's office. Parliament, which practises prevarication but hates being its victim, begins to rumble. The Secretary of State for Trade & Industry resigns. Conservative MPs rally round the Prime Minister; but everyone agrees that she's been weakened by speculation about how much she personally authorised, and how little she seems to have known.

WELL, IT WAS NO WATERGATE: but it was a cautionary example of how quickly a hurricane can blow up in a clear sky. A hurricane, that is, in Whitehall and Westminster terms. Cabinet rows—resignations—lame statements to a howling House of Commons—mild questions concealing lethal barbs—angry fear in the ruling party—the Opposition scenting blood—newspapers speculating about the next election and the next Conservative leader: it read like a novel by Disraeli, Maurice Edelman, or Douglas Hurd. And that's the way that most of the British press played it. "Who governs Britain?" seems to have been the question, as it was in 1974.

Forgive me if my fixation's showing, but—"with respect", as they lyingly say—all this parochial kerfuffle looked like an outbreak of green-necktie disease. We even had some green-necktie reporting: about Leon Brittan's picturesque Yorkshire constituency; about his departmental press officer's youthful spell as an alleged nude model; about the Westland chairman's Intelligence background; about Michael Heseltine's trip to the washroom, just after resigning, to comb his hair for the cameras outside. But, so far as I've seen, only one British journalist—Ian Davidson of the *Financial Times*—expressed his and my amazement at "the number of otherwise well-informed and well-intentioned people who seem blissfully unaware of, or indifferent to, this broader backdrop to the Westland saga"—that "European governments have at last begun to talk seriously about defence procurement cooperation."

To say this is not to suggest that Westland is a major British company, that Europe's future hinged on its board's decision, that Michael Heseltine is a reincarnation of Jean Monnet, that Leon Brittan is a twister, or that Mrs Thatcher is a Nixonette. Westland was a symbol and a symptom, not a make-or-break opportunity; Michael Heseltine is a shrewd politician; Leon Brittan is loyal and honest; Mrs Thatcher defended her helpers. In politics, however, impressions are what count; and over the weeks of the Westland saga, Britain and the rest of Europe were given some disturbing hints.

One of them, and the most disagreeable, was that anti-

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Semitism and sexism were still not quite dead. I heard someone say "Shylock" of Leon Brittan's too-precise performance in the House of Commons; and "that woman" was a thought, if not a phrase, quite often found in hostile male remarks about Mrs Thatcher. Almost as unattractive were some of the Westland chairman's references to the European consortium, treated as gate-crashers on someone else's party; while spokesmen for the Westland workforce made no bones about not trusting the French. Most damaging internationally was the apparent confirmation that in the last resort—perhaps even in the first—Britain once more preferred to play junior partner to the United States, rather than making common cause with fellow-Europeans so that their joint partnership with America could be more equal.

From this point of view, the British Government's conduct seemed extraordinary. Ostensibly, it left to commercial shareholders a decision about foreign policy—in which direction to nudge a small but important part of defence procurements. Having done so, it allowed one of its Ministers to rally support among European Governments for a consortium to compete with the United Technologies bid. Having done that, it might have been expected to continue its "Hands-off" policy, debatable though it was. Instead, the Government appeared (if no more) to be favouring one side in the argument—and the US side at that.

THE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL merits of the argument may well confirm the Government's apparent preference. Westland has worked well with Sikorsky in the past, and competed against its European rivals; European consortia are notoriously hard to form and maintain. For directors and shareholders, the issue may well be cut-and-dried. But governments, even if committed to minimalism, might be expected to look further ahead than the profit-and-loss account, at the very least to give both options an equal chance. In theory, Mrs Thatcher's Government perhaps did. But it didn't seem like that at the time to those whom Leon Brittan was urging to pipe down; and it still doesn't seem like that to Britain's partners in Europe.

They, after all, have been here before. Ever since General Electric bought the French computer firm Machines Bull, some twenty years ago, Frenchmen have been stressing what Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber called *The American Challenge*—but that's not stopped French firms like CII falling into similar traps. In Italy and the Netherlands, Olivetti and Philips have both made deals with ATT in preference to building European consortia to compete with it; and even the successful European Airbus is now under attack from a rival Boeing product. The lesson seems clear: if Europeans don't act together, the American giants will pick them off one by one. In defence procurements, there are at last signs on the Continent that the lesson is beginning to sink in. It seems a pity that it's not been learnt in Downing Street.

ONE OF THE SUB-ALLEGATIONS in the Westland story was that for Europeans to get together was somehow anti-American. Was there a fear that if United Technologies were denied its stake in Westland, Britain might get a smaller share in SDI research? Perish the thought. A basic principle of US foreign policy since World War II has been to encourage European integration and equal transatlantic partnership—not the dominance of US-based multinational firms. An alliance, like a marriage, thrives on equality. The strains on it are greatest when it's Uncle Sam and the Seven (or Fourteen) Dwarfs.

Fortuitously, the Westland affair erupted just as two British veterans of the European Community published complementary books. The first was Christopher Tugendhat, former Vice-President of the European Commission; the second was its former President, Roy Jenkins. Neither, happily, has lost his sense of style in the polyglot gobbledygook of Brussels; and their messages—one explicit, the other implied—are both germane to the Westland debate.

Christopher Tugendhat's *Making Sense of Europe*[1] is a profound, canny, and elegant plea for the British to take their partners' Euro-hyperbole with a pinch of salt, but to listen hard to what's behind it; to follow Jean Monnet as the pragmatist he was, not the federalist of caricature; to put their backs into the practical things that need to be done to shove Europe along on its slow but momentous "journey to an unknown destination", in the phrase he quotes from the late Sir Andrew Shonfield. He doesn't agree entirely with the case

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[1] *Making Sense of Europe*. By CHRISTOPHER TUGENDHAT. Viking, £9.95.

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advanced above: he sees advantages in the ATT-Olivetti agreement, and he may be right. What he does point out is that if Europeans are serious about keeping up with the Americans, then they certainly need an American-sized internal market, if only as a starting-point.

> "One of the clichés of European gatherings at any level [he writes] is that the total research expenditure of the European countries as separate entities is greater than that of the United States or Japan, yet they get back less than either from their investment. An illustration of this may be found in telecommunications, where the British government estimated in early 1984 that European companies had spent $10 billion developing ten different digital switching systems, while three American companies had spent $3 billion and two Japanese firms $1.5 billion. Similar examples can be found in a host of other industries. In these circumstances the case for European governments to seek ways of jointly mobilising and harnessing their national efforts in certain high-technology and capital-intensive industrial fields is very strong."

The Europeans, of course, are not about to match the US effort in space, defence, and SDI:

> "By themselves European countries cannot mount anything remotely similar. If they are to offer their indigenous industrial and scientific communities opportunities that are in any degree comparable they can only hope to do so on a collective basis."

That, surely, is the real lesson of Westland, once green-necktie dramas are forgotten.

Nor is it a lesson that should be unwelcome in the United States. One of the most irritating sights from Washington—leaving aside books by former Presidents and speeches by Colonel Gaddafi—is a gaggle of Europeans interrupting their squabbles only to complain that Americans ignore them. It's easy to imagine how the late Harry Truman might have responded to impotent grumbling by people too idle or hidebound to get their act together. In the event, he had other worries about Europe—that it might, as he told Sam Rayburn, "go down the drain." And it was Truman, with Dean Acheson and General Marshall, who hatched the plan to set post-War Europe on its feet, and prepared the way for its later unification. Told by Congress that a revived and unified Europe might mean tough competition for American industry, he'd surely have looked his critics in the eye and given them a history lesson. "You know what happened when Europe was divided: we had to come in and sort things out. And I reckon that if we can't take European competition, then we can't take anyone's. Isn't it better for us both to keep each other up to the mark?"

That, at least, is the tone of Truman's published table talk—his racy, reminiscent chats with Merle Miller. Roy Jenkins has used them and the other published sources (including Margaret Truman's biography) in his new and very serviceable account—supplementing them with memories from those who knew the President well.[2] It's a wise, humane book about a very wise, humane man: sometimes a trifle cocky, too dismissive of those he scorned, but always heading for the heart of every argument. "He built well, honestly, and without pretension", Roy Jenkins writes in conclusion. So does this book. Green-necktie enthusiasts will look in vain for irrelevant trivia; scholars may quibble at a point or two. But what's engaging in *Truman* is the sense of a statesman's appreciating a fellow-professional, shrewdly and generously, from an armchair in the same club. Responsibility is a great leveller upwards.

It's evident in both these post-Brussels volumes. Somewhere in the subtext of each of them is an awareness that national concerns in Europe, although still vital, are no longer as central as they were. The world—at the very least, the Western world—is the scene or scale on which priorities must be judged.

In fairy tales, the peasant's maladroit third son would always win the princess and inherit the kingdom. What sort of mouldy realm was it? A German principality? An Italian dukedom? Or the fair land of France? Big deals in their time, all of them. What would the aspirant wish for today? If he had any sense, a quiet life. But if he were really ambitious, would a European nation-state suffice? For some, it certainly seems to; and they're not hard to recognise. It's their green neckties that give them away.

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[2] *Truman*. By Roy Jenkins. Collins, £12.95.

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NOTES & TOPICS

"The End of Thatcher"

Transitional Thoughts—By EDWARD PEARCE

REMEMBER you read it here first. An article published here last year first asserted (and in categoric terms) that Mrs Margaret Thatcher would not lead the Conservatives into the next election. That has been my certain conviction for some time. The events of January surrounding the Westland Corporation provide the occasion for ending Mrs Thatcher's effective control of her party. But arguably the Westland débâcle is as much a sympton of her decline as its cause.

She will not, of course, be leaving just yet. The humiliation of having two Ministers (Secretaries of State, as we absurdly call every head of every modest department) disappear, one in a tantrum of irrational but provoked rage, the other accepting (like the Swiss knight who grasped spears to his own throat to break the Austrian line) responsibility for the cheating, evading, and very nearly lying of the affair, destroys her but makes instant departure impolitic. There was a hideous display on 27 January of the Tory Party at its chorus-line worst—rallying round, hooting the Opposition, waving order papers at the Prime Minister's late and insufficient account of her devious conduct. It was strictly for true believers, the birds, and public show.

The Prime Minister's strongest card in the whole affair has been the absence of a cisatlantic Alexander Butterfield and his tapes. So when Mrs Thatcher tells us that she did not order the leaking of a law officer's confidential letter to injure a Cabinet colleague we have to believe her (well, we do, don't we?). Mrs Thatcher would strenuously avoid telling a *literal* untruth. The lines of defence have taken a classic form. On 24 January nobody believed the meagre little parcel of half-statements she put out. But the message of the back-bench Conservative meeting (the 1922 Committee) in respect of her defence of the Trade Minister, Leon Brittan, was that it should stop. Barry Porter told the Committee that if he was to support the Prime Minister in the emergency debate (as he wished to do), he did not wish to be encumbered with supporting Mr Brittan (which he did not). Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, a cold, ambitious, unattractive man, for whom a cabal has formed on the Tory Left, hinted between the lines during a broadcast that departure would be in order.

Mrs Thatcher was so little prepared for this pressure that when Leon Brittan did go she had no sophisticated replacement on hand, and was reduced to putting into the Cabinet one Paul Channon, a dull pleasant heir to the Guinness fortune, who over 27 years in Parliament had made it to Minister of State (or Deputy Minister) at Trade. The man was overpromoted where he was; his elevation makes a virtue of nonentity.

Meanwhile, the next line of defence, urgently promoted backstage by Conservatives, is one which can be compressed aptly as "Bernard did it": throwing the blame on to the Prime Minister's unpopular but highly competent press officer. We are asked to believe that Mrs Thatcher not only had no knowledge of the plan to leak the Solicitor General's letter despite her own admitted suggestion that he should write it, coupled with the Friday-to-Monday-early-afternoon knowledge—at the height of an angry personalised struggle with Michael Heseltine, the leak victim—that such an instrument of chastisement was being prepared and would be available.

"SHE WAS NOT TOLD" is the official story; and in the absence of Butterfield and his tapes she is well placed to stick by it. But the improbability of anyone so experienced as Mr Bernard Ingham granting his fiat to the Trade Ministry for so comprehensively improper an act as the blowing without permission of the Solicitor General's private correspondence with a Cabinet colleague is extensive. We do not know who initiated the leak, only that Mr Brittan has taken the blame for it and that Mr Ingham has been put on stand-by to take any blame left over.

Mrs Thatcher, according to those who have spoken to her since, does not believe that there was anything for her to defend. Let us, for the sake of variety, believe her. Leon and Bernard can go off and read Chapter 7 of *The Prince*. In that account, an over-zealous lieutenant of Cesare Borgia did the bidding he thought he had received to subdue a City of the Romagna, making many enemies in the process, only to be found chopped up in the Piazza one morning with a note of regret from Cesare to the citizens at the excesses of

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his subordinate. All Civil Servants and Ministers should familiarise themselves with the tale of Messer Ramon D'Orco who, shall we say, misinterpreted his instructions. True Princes (and Princesses) never commit a villainy; they have someone do it for them.

None of her obfuscations or the choreography of her Whips' Office will, in my view, save Mrs Thatcher after the passage of a few months, that useful interlude, from a decent interment. On my calculations she would have gone anyway. The Government and she personally are colossally unpopular. The opinion polls say as much. The Fulham by-election is being discounted as a probable Alliance victory, even though they had only 18% of the vote at the General Election. For all practical purposes, the Government is fighting not a national three-party campaign, but a two-party battle with Labour in London and the North, and a two-party battle against the Alliance in the South. Not by any means is *everything* Mrs Thatcher's fault, though she has worn the patience of colleagues quite through with her attempts to behave as a kind of universal O'Grady, saying "Do this", and expecting it to be done. The Conservatives always occupied a false position simply because of the relationship between votes and seats. It is pleasant and useful to have 42% of the vote, but deeply misleading to emerge with 63% of the seats.

It was at precisely this point where Mrs Thatcher personally went wrong. From her 1983 election date onwards, she displayed hubris—over GCHQ, the BBC, Top People's Salaries (as we British sickeningly call them), and over Sarah Tisdall and Clive Ponting (both prosecuted, and one sent to jail, for leaking!). But Mrs Thatcher never had the electoral arithmetic to afford hubris.

It hardly requires hindsight to observe that the Conservative Government re-elected in 1983 was the beneficiary of two things: half-a-decade of civil war inside the Labour Party culminating in the leadership of Michael Foot, a man who, despite personal sweetness and profound decency, was popularly perceived as a political eccentric; and, on the other hand, the putty, brass, and paint of the Falklands war. That terrible irrelevance was worth a lot of votes in its day (and it is costing an unconscionable amount of money now). On those terms the Tories were always going to win, though there is nothing to justify Moët et Chandon in 42%.

Now, as our grandparents used to say, "Be sure your sin will find you out." The Tories (or at least Mrs Thatcher) started bullfrogging on the strength of that misleading victory, itself swollen absurdly by the voting system. They reacted to the still-unanswered charges on that murky matter, the sinking of the *General Belgrano*, with the bell, book and rope of affronted authoritarians; and they were connived at in all this by the Judiciary. Mr Justice McCowan's summing up, in the Ponting case, which identified the interests of the State with the interests of the Government of the day, belongs in some interleaved anthology of liberty and its enemies! Thomas Jefferson next to Robert Haldeman might be balanced by Mr Justice McCowan and the great assertion of the law's independence of governmental convenience made by Lord Atkin in 1940.

Candidly, the effect of middle-period Thatcher on the Judiciary was to make them sound a little like Western versions of Mr Ceausescu's brothers-in-law. The irony of a vicious unrelenting pursuit of an individual who had leaked for a principle —to expose proposals to lie by a Government which itself would end on the thorns and brambles of its own instructions to a Civil Servant to leak in pursuit of a sleazy power-struggle —is so striking that one could spend an afternoon alone with it in an art gallery. Framed and hung, it is a handsome composition.

Mrs Thatcher's arrogance has, of course, undermined her. I am convinced that the possibility does not exist that she will contest the next election. Indeed, moves are discernible under foot for the succession. One excitable Whip is pushing the case for the unengaging Douglas Hurd; heavier artillery at the top is bent upon a consensual, perhaps uncontested, candidate in the form of Sir Geoffrey Howe. Mrs Thatcher, who is quite capable of perceiving no fault in herself, wonders aloud at the fuss and asserts that all is as it should have been. Meanwhile, a poll of the public taken by one TV channel shows 20.4% believing that she has told the truth and 70% *not* believing.

In my estimate she was doomed anyway, as an electoral liability who was turning the voters off and away. Garlanded with contemptuous disbelief, she is simply the interim

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occupant of office space. Mrs Thatcher's only enthusiasts remain Opposition politicians, who show signs of panic if her departure is mentioned. The Tories, having strutted around for two years when all sense bade them use their tenuous electoral advantage with some sensitivity, and having behaved rather less like an elected liberal democratic government than one would wish, now recall very late that those who live to please must please to live.

THE WORD AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL IS: "No election before 1988." They recall that Alec Douglas-Home, who was vaulted into Downing Street after the Profumo scandal of 1963, came within four seats of holding office when Labour had been running away with the opinion polls. They are not precisely looking for a carbon copy of that good man, but they are looking for personality rather than policy differences. To choose either a committed "Wet" or a militant "Dry", when Mrs Thatcher herself has largely abandoned philosophy for office, would be a preposterous way of fostering internal conflict. Her successor has to be very widely acceptable, and he has to be an apostle of tranquillity. The entire Westland scandal had, after all, its deepest roots in the resentments created over years by her bullying and preaching approach to colleagues.

All wisdom points to Sir Geoffrey Howe, the watered water of whose style will actually put out any fires currently blazing on the Thames. Ideally he would work in tandem with Mr John Biffen, whose serene and elegant wit, Somerset accent, and inability to scramble on to the rostrum of self-importance would make an effective campaigning Chairman. As for the former front-runners, candidly, deals can be struck. People who had hoped to be leader can be told, quite truthfully, that the Tories are well placed to come third out of three if there is more squabbling—and wouldn't they like to be Foreign Secretary, Leader of the House, or whatever. . . .

It has to happen quite soon. Ahead lie Fulham, the Local Council elections of May, and poll after unsmiling poll to say that people do not believe Mrs Thatcher is telling the truth and that 29%, 28%, or 27% of them will finally vote for her! The great Alliance requirement has always been momentum, a degree of belief that votes cast for them will actually produce victories. They have a barrier, and any rational Tory or Labour analyst of the events must know that they are very close to coming through that barrier.

Accordingly, I would expect a transition from the Thatcher era to be expeditious. It must be distanced, of course, from the specific Westland scandal, but the new man (and how many votes is it worth that it will be a *man*?) needs longer than Sir Alex Douglas-Home's ten months to play himself in and impinge on the public consciousness.

The two pincers of May and October are important. In May the Tories will go down to Council results which may seem like Leipzig ahead of Waterloo. In October the usually ceremonial re-election of the Conservative leader will take place. In place of the customary shoo-in, a humiliatingly high score for a straw candidate or, who knows, actual defeat at the hands of a real one, pops off the page. The legislative programme will be effectively finished in June, the Commons needs to be sitting for electoral action. In that light, July looks like the month in which Mrs Thatcher either complains of bad headaches or is told that she has them.

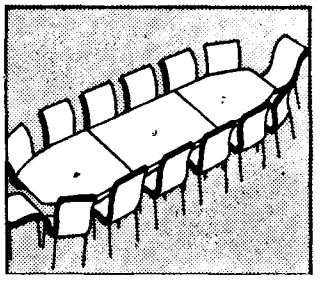
NOBODY WANTS TO BE UNKIND or to frighten the horses. A departure by way of the backbenches (by-elections are a bit tricky) to a female Earldom on the dissolution might well be the route. Meanwhile a terrified party, stricken by the latest bad results, agrees to a leader or leadership team (we may be feeling rather post-personality-cult) with whom to regain at the next election not so much office as a reputable place with 250 seats plus, as one of the major parties of British politics. The extent of the harm done by a combination of long-term abiding unpopularity, the rise of a credible claimant on the middle-class vote, compounded by a near-Nixonian collapse of personal credit, is past computation. Mrs Thatcher does not understand it herself. The terrible effects of a long term of office and our Anglo-Chinese tradition of mandarin Civil Servants, themselves turned into brisk, fond lackies to fetch and carry, and the bubble of unknowing within which Prime Minister and Cabinet Secretary hide—out of touch with people, common sense, and the working realities—all divorce her from understanding.

New leaders are all very well, but the process of government has itself been corrupted. Imagine Clem Attlee, imagine Harry Truman behaving like this, or falling into the habits of mind which make it possible to behave like this, and you see the ground we have traversed, following correct Civil Service procedures, in the wrong direction. That is a longer thought for another day. In the interim the Thatcher era is over, and somebody had better tell her.

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Negotiating with Moscow



WHAT DOES IT MEAN to negotiate with the Soviets? What principles does their opposite number need to bear in mind? The cardinal consideration is that from the Soviet point of view a "good" negotiation never concludes in an equal balance of concessions. An agreement is attractive to the USSR only if it enables them to get more than they give, either in the short or in the longer term.

A second principle for any Western negotiator is to understand that the Soviets enjoy the privilege of starting off one step ahead. They are able to influence the public opinion of

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the democratic countries, whereas the reverse is only minimally possible, and without any measurable effect. Obviously, the Western powers cannot postpone a Summit indefinitely without courting the accusation from their voters of "refusing dialogue." It is a misleading accusation because the fact is that, in the usual run of things, "dialogue" is never completely at a standstill, while in summits it is more apparent than real. As a result, either the Western leader will nicely concede a point in order to show goodwill, in which case Moscow scores an advantage, or else he makes no concessions at all, in which case he runs the risk of being denounced as a threat to peace in front of his own electorate.

In spite of all these standard pitfalls, Ronald Reagan appears to have returned from Geneva unscathed. The general feeling in Washington (where I happened to be staying during and just after the Summit) nevertheless seemed to amount to a satisfaction too vague not to subside. For Richard Perle (the Assistant Secretary of Defence), who is considered to be even tougher than his chief, Caspar Weinberger, and who took part in Day Two of the Summit, it is a significant gain to have been able officially to state the American intention of helping the "freedom fighters" in Afghanistan, Angola, and Nicaragua without causing a breakdown. In Perle's view, the USA no longer has to abstain from helping the resistance movements in order to be able to keep discussing Arms Control with the Kremlin leaders.

Jack Kemp (a member of Congress who I'm told is now seen as a strong rival of Vice-President George Bush as the next Republican Presidential candidate) judged the Summit both "a defeat for Soviet propaganda" and a drawn game, since the dialogue dealt mainly with how to go on pursuing the dialogue.

That is also the impression of Jeane Kirkpatrick (who is thought to have Vice-Presidential ambitions). However, the former US Ambassador to the United Nations expresses some distrust of "dialogue-as-an-end-in-itself", as a credit-raising technique by which the Soviets nearly always manage to achieve some advantage without giving anything in return. For the eminent expert on strategic problems, Professor Albert Wohlstetter, Gorbachov suffered a very clear defeat in Geneva, in so far as he could not budge Reagan at all on the issue of the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI or "Star Wars"), which was obviously the main object of the Summit.

In fact, Reagan succeeded in holding on to his Space Defence project without thereby being seen as a "warmonger" by his own public or by his European allies. On the contrary, he even managed to appear as a conciliator, whereas Gorbachov lost some of the shine off the new bright image he had too easily built up.

BUT WHAT WAS AT the bottom of the talks? I noted in the *New York Times* (22 November 1985) a table summarising the advances made under four headings: (*1*) points on which there was agreement; (*2*) points which confirmed an agreement or discussions already under way; (*3*) new initiatives; and (*4*) unresolved problems. It showed at first glance that all the really basic questions fell under this fourth heading. By far the easiest decision to make was the one which concerned the resumption of . . . cultural, especially choreographic, exchanges. Apart from this happy thought, which will enable the balletomanes of all nations to unite, let us also salute the resolution to pursue the Multiple Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks at Vienna, on the reduction of conventional forces. Some improvement, seeing that they have already dragged on for well over a decade.

Various other arrangements, minor though they are, were no less instructive: thus, the resumption of commercial flights between the USA and the USSR amounts to a pardon for the affair of the Korean civil airliner shot down by Soviet fighter command in 1983. Moscow knows by experience that Yankee tough talk eventually subsides, as happened with the cancellation of the grain embargo even though there had been no improvement in the situation that caused it (the invading Soviet Army in Afghanistan). So far as I could see, Poland did not get so much as a mention.

THIS LAW OF EROSION operated on the whole range of what are called "regional problems." In October, before the General Assembly of the United Nations, Reagan had drawn attention to five of these "problems": Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Angola, and Nicaragua. The Soviet "desire for peace", he stated, had an opportunity to make itself felt by helping to settle some localised conflicts much less complex than the balance of nuclear offensive weapons or space defence. But at Geneva, no matter what they claim, the Americans once again failed to link the two orders of questions. The official optimism tarnished on contact with the particularly hollow verbal concoction which it produced in the final communiqué:

> "Recognising the usefulness of the exchanges of views on regional questions which have already taken place, including those at the level of the experts, they [Reagan and Gorbachov] have agreed to pursue these exchanges on a regular basis."

Furthermore, the US President and his experts made the rather naive announcement, on their return, that the USSR intended to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan "as soon as a political solution is found." It will be recalled that France fell for the very same trick in 1980 when it swallowed an identical declaration by Brezhnev. That is because, for a Westerner, a political solution means a negotiated solution, rather than a military one. But this is a serious misunderstanding—because in Soviet terminology the expression means: We will withdraw from Afghanistan as soon as a Communist régime can survive in a stable, settled manner without the help of the Red Army.

Such an ideal state of affairs would seem difficult to achieve so long as a few Afghan tribesmen still remain there. As the Soviets have never allowed a single one of their satellites freely to become non-Communist again, the US may well have to pay a very high price for seats at that particular *grande première*.

We know what price is being asked for this concession, as well as for others: the sacrifice of Western defence in outer

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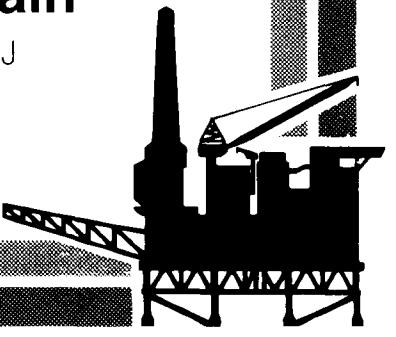

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space. Here was the hard kernel of the Geneva meeting, if not its only real subject. After all, human rights (and other themes familiar among the diplomatic overtures) cannot make any sort of decisive progress in Communist countries without altering the very essence of the system. Consequently they can only be the object of propaganda concessions, not basic ones. At all such conferences, the Soviets know what is going to be said to them on these themes, and they know what they are going to reply. After that, they get down to the serious agenda.

FOR THE AMERICANS to jettison the SDI in exchange for an equal reduction in offensive nuclear weapons by both sides—this was Gorbachov's aim. In my view, this equality would be quite deceptive, since the Soviet arsenal is greater than the West's in quality, quantity, and in types of weapons. Even after a 50% cut on both sides, the USSR would still be the stronger in a situation in which only offensive weapons existed. But to demand, on top of that, the prior abolition of the defensive SDI is to aspire to a difference in the respective sacrifices so huge that it takes the monumental cheek of a Soviet bargainer to dare frame a negotiation in such terms.

For this amounts to confining the debate to ground upon which the Soviets are certain of retaining the advantage. "The SDI project", Richard Perle told me, "is our only means of response to the increase in Soviet offensive weapons. To reply with a counter-increase in our own offensive weapons would be competing in the area where *we* are weak, and not the area where we are *strong*, that of active defence, where we have a lead over the Soviet programme that we are able to extend. . . ."

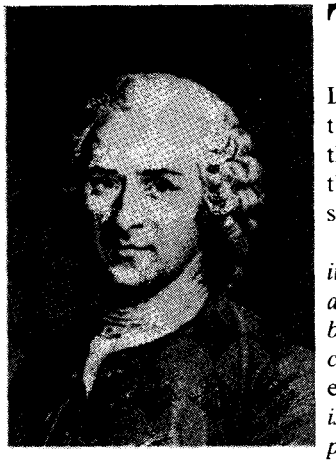
That is not the opinion of American experts alone. In his recent book *La guerre des cent secondes* (Fayard), which I found sharply brilliant both in style and in thought, General Pierre Gallois is in total agreement. To be sure he comes out against SDI, but that makes him all the less suspect of bias when he coolly asserts that in the field of offensive weaponry, even "after ten years effort, the US will not catch up with the Soviet Union."

Another expert, the American scientist Robert Jastrow, has emphasised that the *nuclear* forces of the Warsaw Pact (as regards so-called "conventional forces" the fact is long established) are now much greater than NATO's, and, furthermore, that the Soviets are reported to be on the point of discovering a means of locating—and targeting—missile-carrying submarines. This would call in question the effectiveness of a sizeable part of the Western deterrence (and of the Anglo-French deterrent in particular).

WHAT, THEN, IS the art of negotiating with the Kremlin? Surely two lessons have emerged from the Geneva Summit. First, no doubt it is not possible to do without these summits altogether. But from the point of view of our own security and our own interests, there is no great difference between periods with summit and those without. The period from 1960 to 1979 was one of frequent summitry—and also of declining Western security. One recalls that the Brezhnev-Carter Summit of 1979, celebrating the signing of the SALT II agreement on the control of offensive weapons, was immediately followed by the invasion of Afghanistan and a rise in tension. On the other hand, the six summitless years that followed, characterised by the East-West confrontation first about the Cruise and *Pershing* Euro-missiles and then about the SDI, tended to correspond with a reinforcement of Western positions. The habitual Soviet line—"Give up defending yourselves, or you will trigger the nuclear apocalypse"—had failed; and the Soviets soon came round to a resumption of dialogue. . . .

The second lesson of Geneva is that Mikhail Gorbachov is not, really, the least bit different from his three predecessors when it comes to basic issues and methods of negotiation. He is sharper and livelier than they were (no hard task). But behind the man, no matter who he may be, it is always the system that speaks; and it is the system that has to be studied. It is with the system that we must learn to deal, not with any passing individual, and still less by means of glib psychologising about the character (or even the wife) of the latest incumbent.

Blaming Rousseau



THE FRENCH LEFT is beset by failures, in action as in thought. A Left-wing investigator has traced "the Left connection" three centuries back, and found the culprit: Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his "Social Contract."

"*The nationalisation of credit, of banks, and of insurance. . . . The Government will be regarded as the supreme controller of production.*" An excerpt from the "*Projet socialiste*" or one of the "*Cent-dix propositions*" made by François Mitterrand when seeking office? No. The text dates from 1848, and comes from the celebrated 19th-century French Socialist Louis Blanc.

"*We must dethrone the power of money, which kills, buys, and corrupts the very conscience of men!*" A fine rhetorical flight—characteristic, you may think, of that grand old man of 1848. Wrong. This time it's Mitterrand, speaking at Epinal on 13 June 1971.

Commerce "*is a system of extermination, an unceasing agent of impoverishment and ruin.*" Mitterrand developing his argument? Wrong again. These are the words of Louis Blanc, vintage 1848.

One could continue the game with quotations from the orators and theorists of the French Revolution, like Gracchus Babeuf, precursor of communism and instigator of the "*conspiration des Egaux*", or the Abbé Mably, precursor of the Revolution itself. They and others have one point in

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common. All are disciples of Jean-Jacques Rousseau: they base their political philosophy on *Du contrat social*.

In a brief, clear, and comprehensive essay, Jacques Julliard has traced over three or four centuries the genealogy of the Left's intellectual failure.[1] Not merely the failure of the Left in France since 1981, but a more general failure, archetypal and universal.

Sometimes one rubs one's eyes and wonders whether the leader-writer on *Le Nouvel Observateur* has not been kidnapped and brainwashed by a gang of neo-liberal terrorists. They, surely, must have dictated some of his statements: that in 1981 "*the Left won its electoral victory at the very moment of its intellectual defeat*"; that for several years we have been witnessing "*the ever more rapid decadence of a cultural and political system*"; that "*today, Socialists are discovering Social Democracy, but too late*"; that "*the social benefits of Nationalisation can now be seen as virtually nil*"; or that "*the short-sighted protection of jobs only worsens unemployment*."

Language of that sort certainly steals the thunder of the "capitalist lackeys"! What on earth had Rousseau been up to? Well, he invented the *volonté générale*, the "General Will", expressed by popular suffrage. A very democratic idea, to be sure, but with one disadvantage—that the oligarchy put in power by the voters believes that election gives it unlimited rights. Regarded as representing, once elected, what even the Soviet Constitution calls "the whole people", the Government thinks itself right to impose its power on each of the individuals in society. The State which is based on a metaphysical abstraction—the "general will"—believes it can legitimately thwart every individual will. This is what Bertrand de Jouvenel, in his book *Du pouvoir*, rightly called "totalitarian democracy"—as contrasted with American democracy, continually negotiating compromises between minorities.

Of course, and very fortunately, there is such a thing as omnipotent democracy which is not totalitarian: one instance is in France. "French *étatisme*", writes Jacques Julliard, "has almost always respected the individual liberty of the citizen." But what price this liberty in practice? "*Etatisme* tilts the balance in favour of the state and against those it controls, who lack any counterweight or any real guarantees." France may be a republic: but we all know how little power its citizens have against arbitrary action by Governments or mal-administration by Civil Servants. In our country, good connections carry more weight than a good cause.

In France, moreover, the intellectual tradition which makes the Government the sole embodiment of the general will, and hence an elected dictatorship, is aided and abetted by another—the belief that society can be manufactured. This is what Jacques Julliard calls "the *tabula rasa* obsession." It long predates Mitterrand's ill-starred "Common Programme" with the Communists: it goes back as far as the French Socialists of the 19th century, who passed it on via Marx to Lenin and Mao. It goes back further, to the Jacobins, utopians, and economic theorists of the 18th century, and even to 17th-century classicism. One of Julliard's best chapters reveals the affinities between classicism and Jacobinism. For both, human nature was universal clay, infinitely malleable—square one in the task of social education. The point had already been made in Hippolyte Taine's *Origins of Contemporary France* (1871-94), a very intelligent study which Julliard helps to rescue from undeserved neglect. He also pays tribute to the brilliant Frédéric Bastiat (1801-1850), who sought to explain why 19th-century Socialists regarded society as an artificial creation born of the legislator's genius.

> "One idea [wrote Bastiat] has dominated all thinkers and all great writers in France . . . the idea, fathered by study of the classics and passed on into socialism, that humanity is inert matter which depends upon the authorities for life, organisation, morality, and wealth."

A logical consequence of this obsession is eagerness for a monopoly of education—spectacularly reaffirmed in France in 1983 and 1984. Such a monopoly is indispensable, of course, if thoughts and feelings are to be adequately "moulded."

Based partly on the notion of the general will (supposedly contracted out to the ruling élite), and partly on what F. A. Hayek calls "constructivism", this ancient politico-cultural edifice has only recently collapsed. What is striking is that the failure of the "Union of the Left", from 1972 to 1984, is now casting discredit on the past. An earlier manifestation, begun in the Soviet Union in 1917, has simultaneously been discredited, at least as a value system. And similar doubts are now being expressed about the French Revolution. Bolshevik dictatorship used to invoke 1793 and the Committee of Public Safety. Such hallowed precursors look less attractive now that Soviet totalitarianism is in such disrepute. In Julliard's view, the revolutionary impulse which began in France and the Western world in 1789 is effectively spent.

From time to time, waking in a cold sweat from the *cauchemar libéral* his analysis has produced, and thinking of how it will upset his friends, Jacques Julliard sticks a little red flag on his anti-Socialist bombshell. Abruptly, he writes: "I

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[1] *La faute à Rousseau*. By Jacques Julliard. Editions du Seuil.

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do not believe that economic growth automatically leads to social benefits"—as if they had ever resulted from anything else! Or he deplores "the current tendency to condemn Marxism without trial." Without trial? As if Marxism had not been continually tried and found wanting, both in theory and in practice.

In the end, however, Julliard recovers, seconded by the great 19th-century thinkers about whom he writes so well. Guizot makes him relax; Renan offers him wise advice; Pierre Paul Royer-Collard calms him; Bastiat makes him smile. With their help, he once again becomes lucid.

J.-F. R.

Moses with a Machine-Gun

Rossini Executed—By DAVID PRYCE-JONES

THE English National Opera has a policy of staging works which, for one reason or another, are not part of the standard repertoire. Rossini's *Moses* seemed to fit the bill. Originally performed in Naples in 1818—as *Mosè in Egitto*—with an enthusiastic Stendhal at the first night—it was subsequently revised by Rossini for audiences in Paris, where it proved popular with a whole generation; Balzac and Berlioz both wrote in its praise.

Rossini himself spoke of the opera's "tragico-sacred action", but its contemporary Romantic idiom emerged in the role of Miriam, a young Jewess who creates havoc by falling in love with Pharoah's son Amenophis. The programme at the London Coliseum immediately revealed that authenticity and the original drama were not about to be respected. Here were photographs of clenched fists in Johannesburg and stocking-cap terrorists in Londonderry, tricked out with quotations from the likes of Menachem Begin and Zinzi Mandela. And sure enough, the curtain rises on Moses and the children of Israel in military-camouflage tatters. The Egyptians enter in Latin-American-style double-breasted grey suits. *Moses* has been perverted into a text about national liberation movements and power-coming-from-the-barrel-of-a-gun.

Rossini—of all men to be politicised! Rossini, who can hardly wait to escape from the lamenting minor key into the vitalising major, in whose music is a spring of irrepressible delight in life, who was a wit and free spirit if ever there was one. He venerated Mozart, whose final chorus "Gloria Tutti" in *Figaro* is the properly idealised ending of opera, in which the complex ties between comedy and tragedy are understood and reconciled. "Gloria Tutti" might be Rossini's own perpetual and life-enhancing motto.

Once he noted of himself, in the margin of a score, "*Peu de science, un peu de coeur, tout est là!*" Not too much science, but a little heart. In the course of a celebrated encounter with Richard Wagner (as recorded by a French musicologist, Edmond Michotte) Rossini told his visitor, "The feeling that moved me most during my life was the love that I felt for my mother and my father, and which they repaid me at usurious rates. I am happy to tell you. . . ." Wagner was destined to suffer even more from corrupted producers, and when the talk turned on the topic Rossini gave advice on how to respond: Ill will is legion, he said, and can be fought only with silence and inertia.

No doubt this attitude involved temperament, as well as good manners. Rossini had too much sense and humour to be combative. In another famous literary memoir, Stendhal has described how after the first performance of *The Barber of Seville*, Rossini mistook the noise of applause for heckling and hid under the bed in his lodgings. In April 1848—at a time when his admirer Richard Wagner was (with Bakunin) in Dresden, participating in a revolution—Rossini happened to be accidentally caught in a political incident, insignificant in itself but nevertheless impressing its mark of horror on the rest of his life. A demonstration was taking place in his home town of Bologna, and when Rossini came out on the balcony of his house, some Sicilians below shouted at him, "Rich reactionary!" He departed for Florence at once, returning later to Bologna with a police escort, and then only for the purpose of selling his house in order to settle in Paris. In 1866 he wrote to Pacini reflecting on his withdrawal from composing: "This art, which has for sole basis idealism and sentiment, cannot separate itself from the influence of the times in which we live; and idealism and sentiment have been exclusively diverted in these days to *steam*, to *rapine*, and *barricades*. . . ."

NOW AN OPERA OF HIS has been presented as a barricade, and nothing else. This Moses at the Coliseum is as hairy as Castro, his arms almost all the time extended high above his head, accompanied by his nephew Eleazor as Ché Guevara, with a lugubrious blue beret and brief-case.

Nor is it enough to dress up the Egyptians as fascistoid capitalists. Pharoah has the look of a Hafiz Assad or a Gaddafi, complete with dark glasses and decorations. Red banners create an apparent Nuremberg rally everywhere around them. At each and every moment when Egyptians

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and the children of Israel are on stage together, barbarities are enacted, as belted uniformed policemen brutalise the masses with crowd-control barriers and sinister weapons. Not a single opening is lost to jab a Sten-gun into someone's ribs, to rehearse physical abuse and even torture, as in a scene of gratuitous branding. In one particularly blatant piece of stage business, the Jews are shown preparing for liberation by secreting stolen arms. The beautiful second act duet of Amenophis and Sinaida (in blonde wig and shirt-and-tie, ostensibly a parody of Mrs Thatcher) has as backdrop a teleprinter flashing slogans about "BRETHREN OF EGYPT", amid vast bulletin-boards of newspaper clippings worthy of your local radical cell. More than once, the music is actually interrupted by simulated gunfire and other such crudities.

"You Jews, you are going to die", we hear in the final act, in which of course Miriam's ill-starred love is rather weaker than her nationalistic zeal.[1] Making their way to the Red Sea, the Jews are represented as a tragic column very evidently designed to evoke Auschwitz. This time they have an armoury of stolen weapons with them. The Egyptians are not then overcome by an act of God, but by an armed uprising of the people. The red ribbons which had been used to manacle the prisoners now serve, untied and unfurled, as a sea of revolutionary flags. The meaning of these ubiquitous red banners becomes clear as the Egyptian dead are left to lie under them. In a final outrage, Moses puts Pharoah and Sinaida and other Egyptian survivors before a People's Tribunal, and he gives the execution orders by banging his biblical staff upon the earth. If the Bible had not made God's *parti-pris* in the story all too familiar, there could have been staged the even more fashionable and absurd rhetoric of a radical-chic Arafat leading the Palestinians home in victory over Zionist imperialism.

TO WHOM, I wonder, should the blame go for being first to distort the past for the sake of propaganda in the present? Shaw—Mayakovsky—Brecht? What is unhistorical or anachronistic might be overlooked as ideological aberration and aesthetic delusion on the part of a producer who thinks himself a very fine up-to-the-minute fellow. But false analogies serve to obscure and even to defame the truth. Ancient Egyptians have their faults, and so do Assad and Gaddafi; but they have very little in common with one another, and none of them is in any sense comparable to the Nazis. Theatrical suggestions on these lines vulgarise and trivialise what is already difficult enough to define accurately. To compare the European Jews of Auschwitz to the ancient tribes who crossed the Red Sea, or to any other people at any other time, is to exploit the Holocaust as a symbol. It is to try to score debating points at the expense of these people, and thus empty their death of its reality. To treat the victims of Nazism as an easy and convenient illustration to something else, to any particular subject at hand, is to display inhuman contempt for them.

Nor does the abuse stop there. A production like this denies the spectator the right to his own judgment; for with agit-prop arrogance it is instructing him that he is too stupid and unimaginative to hear echoes or reach conclusions of his own about what he is seeing, and therefore everything has to be explained in a hammer-blow manner which allows no argument. A threat is implied—go along with this, or else. . . .

No doubt this reflects the militant cultural attitudes of a hitherto important public sponsor, the Greater London Council, now fading away upon the hour. A private business company by the name of Norwest Holst has also put up money for *Moses*. (Shareholders in the company might well be advised to get out at any price—since their capitalistic board is so obviously unaware that rope is being sold *à la* Lenin, upon which to hang them.)

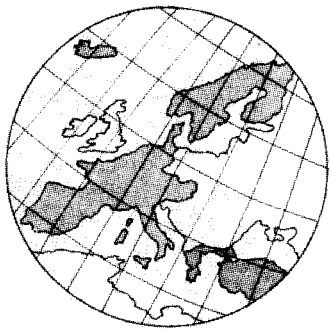
Duly warned, the public should stay away from the London Coliseum until it is clear that opera will no longer be put to grotesquely tendentious purposes. Admirers of Rossini far outnumber politically obsessed directors and producers, and it would be fitting to use his "silence and inertia" in this way against the handful who wish him, and us, so ill.

[1] The service performed by the libretto in English translation may be discerned from the opening stanza, in which "*Et permets que dans leur patrie, Les Hébreux rentrent triomphants!*" has been rendered as "To their land, to the promised country, Proud and free, let your people go!"

The European Interlude

By Jean-Claude Casanova

Paris



THE EUROPEAN events proliferate—meetings of Ministers, conclaves of Heads of State—and if one is to have criteria by which politicians are to be judged on such occasions, their actions have to be seen not in terms of slapdash communiqués, but in the longer perspective of post-War history.

Europe no longer plays the role in the wider world that it did before 1914—a fact explained by the two Great Wars that its "sovereign" nations did not know how to avoid. They were even unable to limit the wars and their consequences because they were not equipped to deal with the "rise of the masses", technological change, industrial mobilisation, and the onset of totalitarian religions. Europe emerged from these wars economically drained, and with its heartland amputated. Its Eastern frontier now borders an empire more powerful than itself. Unable to defend itself alone, it is tied to the United States. If it was Europe that gave modern technology to the world, the spread of its inventions has brought both ingenious imitation and cutthroat competition.

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Yet how can we overlook Europe's successes? Democracy has thrived and spread; Europe has retrieved most of its economic arrears on the United States and now constitutes one of the world's greatest islands of prosperity; and lastly, through the Common Market (now ambitiously extended to embrace the Iberian peninsula) it has begun to integrate its economies while preserving free trade with the outside world. But although it is the first economic power in the world—with a population greater than the USA or the USSR, its tribes united by their culture if also divided by their nations—Europe is a politically weakened entity. Not only is it not a power to be ranked with the Great Powers, but it is not even *une société exemplaire*, enfeebled as it is with doubt of its own values and goals.

The present crisis exacerbates the picture. Europe now faces four potential long-term threats.

(*1*) The falling birth rate, which will more and more have the effect of weakening Europe by comparison with Africa and Asia.

(*2*) Unemployment: 11% of the active population (as against 2.5% for Japan and 7.25% for the United States).

(*3*) Next, a great "social rigidity", a general term which covers two phenomena: the excessive role of public and social expenditure as a proportion of the national product (much higher than in the USA and Japan, and difficult to reduce); and the rigid structure of wages, which invariably increase with productivity (in contrast to the more flexible USA). This social inflexibility goes some way towards explaining both unemployment and the low level of saving and investment.

(*4*) Lastly, Europe is no longer exporting enough industrial products, nor enough "high-tech" products. It is simply not making the changes that competition would dictate, because it cannot confidently recruit the necessary financial and human resources.

Meetings among statesmen, no matter how enlightened, cannot possibly alter such a situation overnight. But they do impose at least two rules of action. The first is what has to be called a liberal policy—"liberal" by necessity rather than by virtue of doctrine. Everything that enables the market to function more efficiently means reducing unemployment and increasing productivity. This principle, which already inspires a number of leading national politicians, is becoming the major objective of the Community: one great internal market must be established by 1992. Second, the coordination of economic policies remains more necessary than ever. There is no doubt that when the time comes Europe will need to revive demand and encourage investment to stimulate employment; and that will require close monetary and budgetary coordination and the renunciation by every member nation, once and for all, of the dream of some "*autre logique*", of "going it alone", of the old-national roads to felicity.

Will new institutions be needed in order to achieve these goals? The "Community" today includes twelve European countries. As the old French philosophy textbooks used to say, what it has gained in *extension* it has lost in *intensité*.

The negotiation of a new European treaty threatens to drag on forever. The first task consists of improving the process of international decision. The "unanimity rule" cannot be retained in every instance, on pain of paralysis; but a straightforward majority vote, surely, is also out of the question. It therefore remains to define the procedure that will make it possible to differentiate the important questions (those that require unanimity) from the (far more numerous) questions for which a majority vote will suffice.

Who believes that it will be an easy task to establish an "internal market" in seven years? In point of fact this implies a real revolution, with considerable political consequences. A *true* Market implies: (*1*) free circulation of goods and capital, with no customs, or controls, and a reduced level of VAT; (*2*) free circulation of individual citizens (and therefore a common policy for immigration from outside); (*3*) a unified European legal system, and European judges to apply it; (*4*) the end of disguised protection devices, and hence of subventions, special national "standards" and "reserved" public markets; (*5*) the Community-wide deregulation of transportation and energy; (*6*) an eventual single European currency, which is to say, fixed exchange rates, in order to avoid that subtle and perverse form of subvention which is produced by the constant depreciation of the currency. And these are not the only implications. The scale and difficulty of the task renders inevitable what has been called a "three-speed Europe", making it possible to ease the passage of the more faint-hearted and weaker states (like the Greece of Andreas Papandreou) through the necessary stages.

Is it all "technical"? But the foregoing is already thoroughly political. The challenge offered by the Strategic Defence Initiative would make it possible, in my view, to develop a greater awareness of *l'identité européenne*. Technological cooperation would enable the Europeans to enhance their own autonomy in the fields both of industry and of defence security. From this point of view, "Eureka" is a step in the right direction . . . if the West Germans rally to the project, and if it puts on weight.

There is a *Europe nécessaire* which is a blend of prudence and vision. This is the measure by which we have to judge the various summits and the criss-crossing of Ministers in various European capitals. A century ago, Nietzsche wished for a "Union of Europe." More than anything else he feared "politicians with short sight and ready hands", for "the politics of disunion is inevitably a simple 'interlude' politics."

Interludes are always too long.

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A Special Book Section

Politics & World Affairs

From Disraeli to Thatcher

The Avatars of English Conservatism—By ANTHONY HARTLEY

HOW DIFFICULT it is to define English Conservatism! Pragmatic or, at any rate, inconstant in its policies, lacking since the 17th century the ideological foundations of "throne and altar" on which traditional Continental conservatism was based, it remains a Protean creature which changes its form with its environment.

It is this elusive quality which has led some writers to define it in terms of the durable features of human psychology. Lord Hugh Cecil began a classic book on the subject with the statement that "natural conservatism is a tendency of the human mind."[1] Others saw in it a sceptical turn of mind, mistrusting politicians and putting little hope in political solutions. "The man who puts politics first", wrote Lord Hailsham, "is not fit to be called a civilised being, let alone a Christian. . . ."[2] These general philosophical approaches to the subject are distinct from that entity called the Conservative Party, though they embrace it.

In fact, contemporary Conservatism has little to do with "the first Tory party" of the 17th and 18th centuries—the Toryism "generated between a non-juring parson and one's grandmother." There followed economic and administrative reform under Pitt and Peel, and a reaction against the French Revolution which first identified Conservatives as "the national party" and found its theory and its glamour in the writings of Burke.

Even during its opposition to the Reform Bill the Party never set its face against reasonable change. Peel, in his *Address to the Electors at the Borough of Tamworth* (1834), might refuse to live "in a perpetual vortex of agitation", but he was prepared to accept "a careful review of institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, undertaken in a friendly temper. . . ." However, his moderation and pragmatism did not enable him to swing a party of landowners into support of the abolition of the Corn Laws. The destruction of Peel by Disraeli, and the latter's advent as the effective Parliamentary head of the Conservative Party, marked a real break with the past. Disraeli is the founder of modern Conservatism, to which his powerfully mythopoeic mind imparted an impetus which was to last for a century and is not yet exhausted.

In the first Disraeli Lecture (delivered at the St Stephen's club), Norman Tebbit, the present Chairman of the Conservative Party, recently noted that "Disraeli has sometimes been claimed as the property of critics of Margaret Thatcher's government", and then went on to question that claim. Similarly Lord Blake, in a new edition of his excellent history of the Party[3] (a work which, now brought up-to-date, is quite essential for anyone wishing to reflect on English Conservatism), has written that "if a minister talked about 'one nation' and praised Disraeli, it was a safe assumption that he was attacking Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe"—adding, however, that "Disraeli in fact had views about the limited role of government which were much nearer to Mrs Thatcher's than her critics'." Perhaps, therefore, the best way of considering modern Conservatism is to look at its beginning and its end, to see what portion of the inheritance of Disraeli has descended to Margaret Thatcher, his rather unlikely heiress.

WHAT WAS Disraeli's achievement? He was only in office for about seven years, in his short-lived Government of 1868 and the full-length one of 1874. For much of that time his energies were sapped by gout and bronchitis. Reading the official biography by Monypenny and Buckle, with its wealth of detail and quotation, one has the impression of a profusion of ideas which remained unrealised for want of time. Nevertheless, his great speeches of 1872 (at Manchester and the Crystal Palace) introduced themes which have haunted Conservatives ever since: the preservation of institutions; the social welfare of the British people; and "a great policy of Imperial consolidation"—in other words, the maintenance of Britain's position abroad.

But more important even than the themes themselves was the way in which they were presented to his party and to the

[1] Lord Hugh Cecil, *Conservatism* (1912), p. 9.
[2] Quintin Hogg, *The Case for Conservatism* (1947), p. 11.
[3] *The Conservative Party from Peel to Thatcher*. By ROBERT BLAKE. Methuen, £19.95; Fontana, £3.95.

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public. For Disraeli was endowed to an extraordinary degree with the power of imposing his visions upon others. His romantic imagination surrounded everything it touched with a nimbus of glamour through which the voter could dimly perceive a Pisgah view of historical destiny for his country and himself. Nationalism abroad and social improvement at home, built on the foundation of familiar and trusted institutions—these now appear crude enough political devices leading to policies which neglected symptoms threatening for the future (the relative decline in Britain's economic position, for instance); but they were not crude as Disraeli handled them. On his lips they amounted to a convincing and effective appeal—a populist vision which had the power to stir the new working-class electorate with hope for a better future.

IT WAS A MARK OF Disraeli's genius to perceive that, in an increasingly democratic political system with an extending suffrage, it was absolutely necessary to surround the acts of government with an aura of majestic myth. His personal relations with Queen Victoria and his use of the monarchy to enhance the prestige of government are symbolic of the importance he attached to the dignified side of political authority: to that appeal to the emotions of the citizen which is needed to ensure his support for, and cooperation with, the policies of his rulers. "If government", he once said, "is not divine, it is nothing. It is a mere affair of the police office, of the taxgatherer, of the guardroom." Precisely. It was this radiance cast on the business of government that in itself constituted that "finest persuasion in the world" which Disraeli saw as essential to "influence, and modify, and mitigate" habits of which he disapproved.

In part, Disraeli's ability to cast this spell stemmed from a sense of history which, in turn, may have been stimulated by his own consciousness of the historical roots of his family and of his race. It was in this sense perhaps that he could say (in the person of Sidonia in *Tancred*): "All is race—there is no other truth." And again: "In the structure, the decay and the development of the various families of men, the vicissitudes of history find their main solution."

Disraeli saw nations as Proust saw individuals: giants rooted in time. The accumulation of values acquired in the past provided an endowment of strength for the present and future:

> "A civilised community must rest on a large realised capital of thought and sentiment; there must be a reserve fund of public morality to draw upon in the exigencies of national life. Society has a soul as well as a body. The traditions of a nation are part of its existence."

This picture of a whole nation, descending down the ages and drawing its power from a long succession of historical achievements, imparted an almost irresistible conviction to the claim that, if there were no break with the continuity of the past, then new successes would come to adorn the record of British history: new extensions of the *imperium* abroad and increased contentment and tranquillity at home.

THIS WAS THE VISION which Disraeli conveyed to his party and his fellow-countrymen. This was the lure that enabled him to attract to the Conservative Party voters from the middle and working classes who would have been repelled by the land-owning Toryism of an earlier generation. Yet this political romanticism was accompanied—and this was Disraeli's strength as a practical politician—by scepticism about politics and English society. He was, after all, an outsider who had fought his way to his present predominance among the "gentlemen of England." He may have had a high idea of aristocracy, those dukes and peers who sat in his Cabinets, but he never hesitated to send them about their business when he saw the necessity—even when, like Derby, they were old friends and political allies. Also he was often scathing about permanent officials, the Foreign Office being a frequent target.[4]

He had conquered the political and social world of England, but he was not deceived about the value of much that existed there. His talents were well adapted to a widening suffrage which provided him with the instrument of public opinion on which he could play. To that audience he addressed himself inside Parliament and out of it; and from the new categories of voters he built up Conservative support. The "Conservative working man" was his creation. Lord Blake has written that he made of the Conservative Party "the national party." This is true not only in that it claimed to sustain Britain's interests abroad, but also in that, under Disraeli's leadership, it enormously widened its appeal to the nation at large. From a party of landowners it had become one among whose supporters every class of British society was represented.

IF THIS WAS THE LEGACY of Disraeli to his successors, how much of it is still relevant to the Conservative Party today? In what sense can Mrs Thatcher and her Government be accused of abandoning it, or turning their backs on the tradition of "One Nation"?[5]

Clearly, there is no real comparison to be drawn between Disraeli's policies and those of the present day. Too much water has passed under too many bridges for that. Yet, since the tradition he founded is still evoked among Conservatives, it is worth trying to see where the present Prime Minister stands in relation to it. Such an attempt may go some way towards clarifying the position she occupies in the history of Conservatism.

First, it must be said that, for all their apparent differences of personality and style, there are considerable resemblances between Disraeli and Mrs Thatcher as active politicians. Both of them are "outsiders", speaking directly to the electorate over the heads of intermediary interest groups and political

[4] In a letter to the then Foreign Secretary, Lord Stanley, he writes: "Have you heard anything from our Goosy Gander in Berlin, a pretty instrument to cope with the Prussian Minister. . . ."

[5] Disraeli himself does not seem to have used this phrase much, except in so far as it is implicit as a remedy for the "two nations" of *Sibyl*. He suggested rather than originated it.

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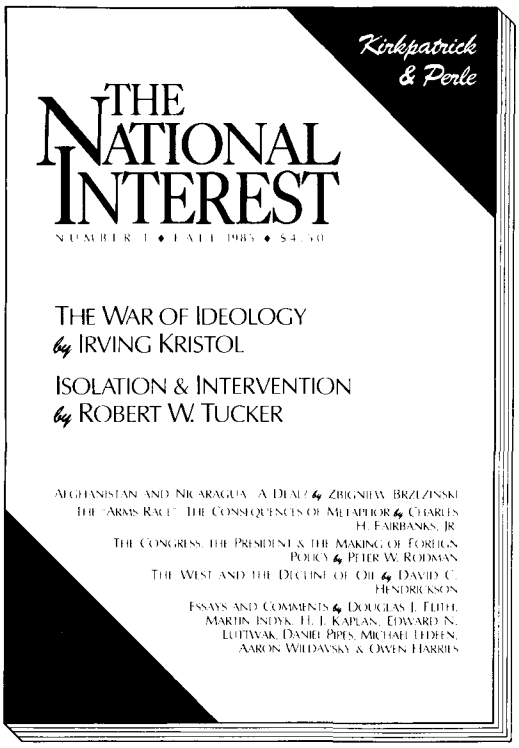
U.S. Foreign Policy: The Debates That Matter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magnates. Both of them are populists. Like Disraeli, Mrs Thatcher came from outside the governing oligarchy of her party and did not share its views. More important, like him she has attracted a new clientele to the Conservative Party. In the 1983 election 40% of the skilled working class and 31% of the unskilled voted Conservative; in the case of the former only 31% voted Labour. Some of this may have been due to "the Falklands factor", but certainly not all of it.

How has this been achieved? One is tempted to answer: "By the identification of new needs and new aspirations among the mass of the British people." To take one example, in the new edition of his standard work *Politics in England: Persistence and Change*[6] Richard Rose points out the importance of Housing in deciding a voter's choice between parties: "People who own their own home (or are buying it on a mortgage) are disproportionately Conservatives; homeowners now constitute three-fifths of the electorate. . . ." The sale of the publicly-owned council houses can, therefore, be considered a revolutionary act of policy which has had political and social effects which will continue for a long time to come. But this is only one reason for support for Mrs Thatcher among the middle and skilled working class.

Such support is, in fact, the result of a general social process through which those who are in employment—after all, still some 80% of the workforce, even allowing for the worst interpretation of the figures—and who are earning wages which are advancing faster than the rate of inflation are beginning to develop aspirations which cannot easily be met by the recipes of the old welfare state. In his Disraeli Lecture Norman Tebbit gave a significant example of this, by comparing the errors of Public Housing (tower blocks having to be demolished after twenty years) with the efficient service provided by the travel industry for those fifteen million people who take holidays abroad each year.

This comparison, too, suggests the emergence of new requirements on the part of the citizen-consumer—requirements which the inflexible remedies of state-socialism cannot satisfy. The complexity of individual needs now leads those numerous wage-earners, who have the means to gratify them, to prefer to decide the use of their own money rather than see it disappear in tax for public purposes which are, no doubt, beneficial, but are not necessarily tailored to individual requirements. Mrs Thatcher has attracted to Conservatism a section of the middle and working classes who want to enjoy the whole gamut of opportunities provided by post-industrial society—home-ownership and holidays in the sun today, share-ownership and private medical schemes tomorrow. This is not to say that these people want to run down public services, but they are looking for a wider range of choice than these afford—than any public body could afford. Most normal individuals aspire to the small satisfactions and advantages which differentiate them from their neighbours and allow them self-expression. Mrs Thatcher's form of Conservatism appeals to those who want an independent choice of life-style and an opportunity to dispose for themselves of a greater proportion of their earnings.

But it is not only economic advantage which has attracted these sections of the population to Mrs Thatcher's version of Conservatism.

Her hostility to, and assaults on, the various strongholds of the British "establishment" are enormously pleasing to those who live outside "charmed circles" and "corridors of power." Her clashes with the "great and good", from patrician Conservatives or the BBC to the Archbishop of Canterbury (and other dignitaries of the Anglican Church), have certainly increased her popularity with the ordinary Englishman who, one suspects, feels the dim suspicion that these dignified institutions have not served Britain particularly well over the last 40 years.

Under her auspices the Conservative Party has ceased to be dominated by the upper classes. It is often said that the retired Army officers on local Conservative committees have now been replaced by active garage proprietors; and, whatever one's social preferences, it can hardly be denied that this is an improvement in terms of the representative quality of the party. It is certainly a little curious to find those commentators who, in the past, were always ready to attack the "class-ridden" structure of the Conservative Party, now effusively regretting the old paternalism.

It is through the owners of small businesses that economic recovery will take place and new employment be created. The emergence of a relatively classless party accords with a general intention of modernisation which has been imposed on Mrs Thatcher by the circumstances of a country where the clash—or worse still, the agreement—between interest groups had produced an atmosphere of lethargy and immobility over large areas of national life.

Mrs Thatcher, therefore, has created a new electoral clientele for the Conservative Party, and she has done so by giving a new interpretation to Disraeli's objective of "the elevation of the condition of the people." The elevation in question is one which will give them more choice as to the benefits they enjoy, and bring the provision of those benefits into relation with their own efforts. It is, so to speak, a self-impelled levitation rather than a lifting up by the hair. The Thatcher Administration has tried to give its voters what it thinks they want: that little bit on the top which expresses their individual choice. This is a policy for the economically active—a phrase which includes skilled and highly-paid workers as well as the heads of small businesses or the self-employed—rather than for those who are directly dependent on the state or employed in either state or business bureaucracy.

SINCE 1979, THEN, one has had the sense of a new class with new requirements emerging in national politics. Uninhibited by guilt or apprehension, possessing no very precise idea of the limits of British power, it nevertheless demands that any government should be seen to be standing up for British interests abroad.

Mrs Thatcher has obliged. The vexed question of Britain's contribution to the Budget of the European Community elicited from her a toughness which was the despair of diplo-

[6] *Politics in England. Persistence and Change*. By RICHARD ROSE. Faber and Faber, £17.50, paper £9.95.

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mats bent on compromise, but was welcomed by the vast majority of voters. Similarly, while her reaction to the Argentine incursion into the Falklands met with doubts and forebodings from those sage figures who expect to have their word to say at times of national crisis, the mass of the British people had no such qualms, having been brought up in the simple school where a punch on the nose is returned in kind.

There is little doubt that Britain's reputation abroad has been enhanced by Mrs Thatcher's presence at the head of affairs; and it seems unlikely that similar results could have been achieved by anyone else. For better or for worse, her triumphs of the will have been more substantial than anything accomplished by de Gaulle. She is, after all, the only British politician whose name is known in other countries, even though for some it may be a byword and a hissing. Disraeli's identification of Conservatism with the national interest has been sustained under her leadership.

Two planks of Disraeli's platform, therefore, are still to be found among the equipment of what is loosely called "Thatcherism", even though "the elevation of the condition of the people" must necessarily assume a rather different form from that of 1872. The third theme—the preservation of institutions and the maintenance of the nimbus of respect that surrounds them—is another matter. Disraeli, after all, was well satisfied with existing British institutions. Their continuation in a dignified way, and their extension in power and influence, were all that he wanted. Moreover, after the fall of Peel he had more than twenty years to accustom his party to change before he himself headed a government. The present Prime Minister, on the contrary, was the beneficiary of a very rapid transformation within the Conservative Party. She had only a short space of time to impose herself on Party and Shadow Cabinet before taking office. Once in Downing Street, much time and energy were devoted to forcing measures on reluctant Ministers inherited from her predecessor. For Mrs Thatcher was determined—and, it is sometimes forgotten, was elected—to produce change.

THE OLD POLITICS of consensus, as applied to industrial affairs, had expressed themselves in a series of institutions or institutionalised practices ranging from the Prices & Incomes Commission to the symbiosis between trade unions and the boards of nationalised industries. On these hallowed bodies and their customs the new Prime Minister laid sacrilegious hands, since she saw in them the bastions of British economic stagnation. Not unnaturally, those connected with (or profiting from) this incipient corporatism—and this included much of official Britain—were horrified at the violation of their familiar rituals.[7] The corporations or baronies which had

[7] Some time after Mrs Thatcher's arrival in Downing Street, I found myself talking to a patrician liberal who was complaining about her destruction of British industry. What was striking was that he spoke of old-established firms in exactly the same tone as he might have adopted in speaking of a treasured family heirloom—something to be kept in a glass case rather than used.

Recently the Earl of Stockton used the same language to deplore the sale of nationalised industries, comparing it to getting rid of the family silver or a Canaletto.

The efficiency or utility of industry never entered into it.

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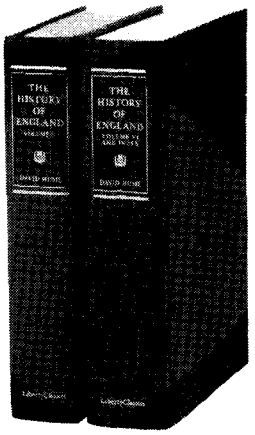

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been prime actors within these bodies were incensed to see the disappearance of forums through which they might hope to bring influence to bear upon the Government. Thus, in the programme of "Thatcherism" was included the destruction or diminution of many institutions—not, it is true, those which would have been familiar to Disraeli, but a network of committees and statutory bodies (including the famous "Quangos", the quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations), most of them dealing with the relations between government and industry, which had grown up gradually over 60 years and whose existence appeared to be a constitutional *fait accompli*.

In local government too, Mrs Thatcher has changed constitutional practice. The immediate *casus belli* here was the resistance to national financial constraints carried on by many local authorities.[8] The unsatisfactory nature of local government finance, which had to be topped up by the rate-support grant from central government, had made the local authorities at once the petitioners and the blackmailers of the Exchequer. The Thatcher Government has used this dependence to try to exert greater control over the financial policies of local government. Perhaps this development was implicit in the system, but the increased centralisation and the growth in Whitehall's responsibilities which resulted from it ran directly contrary to the main inspiration of "Thatcherism": the effort to diminish the role of the state in British society. Attempts to discipline "over-mighty subjects" are not in themselves incompatible with this aim. Nevertheless this has been the area of the Government's greatest failure, an internal contradiction which the Conservative Party will undoubtedly come to regret.

LORD BLAKE HAS WRITTEN that "it has seldom paid the Conservative Party to come forward as the party of change. . . ." But, in 1979, Mrs Thatcher was elected because there was an overwhelming feeling that something *must* change, that Britain's affairs could not go on being conducted as they had been in the past—a sentiment which James Callaghan apparently shared. Hers was a surgeon's, rather than a doctor's mandate; and the patient was certainly warned what he had to expect.

In his recent book *Thatcher: The First Term*,[9] Patrick Cosgrave has devoted much space to the embattled aspect of the Thatcher Government and the Prime Minister's struggle against the principalities and powers of British life. However, he has written rather less about the problems which her forcible tactics were meant to solve. For the state of Britain in 1979 was not without its note of desperation—the more so in that the nature of the crisis was not readily apparent to the average citizen. British industry had its capacity for adaptation to new conditions slowed down by the trammels of trade-union power and the frivolity of much of its management.[10] It had to face not only a recession but also a crisis brought about by advances in technology, which replaced men by expensive machines and shifted the direction of trade from the Atlantic to Western Europe. Much of industry was near collapse under the pressure of foreign competition. Attempts at salvage were delayed until it was almost too late by trade-union procrastination, motivated as often as not by a failure to understand what was happening around them rather than by any ideological malevolence (though that existed too). Mrs Thatcher's peremptory style probably has as much to do with her sense of the urgency of Britain's problems as with any abstract desire to *écraser l'infâme* in the shape of Keynesian economics—though, no doubt, irritation with less clairvoyant mortals comes easily to her.[11]

HER ONSLAUGHT on the realities of contemporary Britain was bound to create its own bow-wave of resistance, coalitions of defeated interest groups and baffled politicians. She has been rebuked from the pulpit by a bishop and from Another Place by the Earl of Stockton—even Edward Pearce, once an admirer, seems to despair of her ultimate fate. His latest book, *Hummingbirds and Hyenas*,[12] will not disappoint admirers of his brilliant and corrosive use of language. (Where else could we find Mrs Thatcher's dealings with the patrician Tories compared with those of Peter the Great with the *streltsy*?) With the cry of the great ape-man echoing along Downing Street, the title seems particularly apt. Mr Pearce's principles appear to be those of Gladstonian liberalism, and his mind too is swept by those dark storms of passion, those torments of conviction, which punctuated the career of the Grand Old Man. But most Prime Ministers have, at some time or other, been denounced as morally deplorable by those who disagreed with them, and Mrs Thatcher has yet to encounter disapproval as intense as the high-octane rhetoric poured out by Gladstone on Disraeli.

THOSE CONSERVATIVES who constitute an internal opposition to the Prime Minister—ex-Ministers and others—have found some difficulty in formulating an

[8] Some Labour councils, including the Greater London Council under the inspired Left-wing political leadership of Ken Livingstone, used their money and patronage to create a body of activists devoted to their cause. The subsidies paid to groups of ideologically motivated middle-class "intellectuals"—feminists, homosexuals, ethnic bodies—and the employment of large numbers of "community workers" and "social advisers" went to build up a clientele which might act as a counterweight to Mrs Thatcher's appeal to the working-class voter. It was the organisation of a revolt of the "marginals."

[9] *Thatcher: The First Term*. By PATRICK COSGRAVE. The Bodley Head, £9.95.

[10] In the summer of 1981 I happened to meet a merchant banker who had just been visiting industrialists in the north of England. "Do you know what they were all talking about?", he asked. "Pony clubs!"

[11] Here another comparison with Disraeli is possible. Writing to Lady Chesterfield, he expressed his view of his office in characteristic terms: "If you want to govern the world, you must know how to say '*Bo*' to a goose. And what is the use of power, if you don't make people do what they don't like." Mrs Thatcher certainly knows how to say "*Bo*" to a goose, and there appears to be an adequate supply of birds available to her. As for making people do what they don't like. . . .

[12] *Hummingbirds and Hyenas*. By EDWARD PEARCE. Faber and Faber, £4.95.

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alternative policy to meet the difficulties of Britain's position. Better presentation—yes. More moderation—certainly. Above all, no dogma! But then what? What about inflation? What about unprofitable nationalised industries? How difficult to deal with such questions when one does not wish to do anything doctrinaire!

The case is well illustrated by Francis Pym, whose recent book *The Politics of Consent*[13] is intelligent and well-written, but offers no very certain guidance to those in search of solutions. When discussing social problems Mr Pym suggests four steps that the Government might take. "It should ease the overwhelming priority given to economic policy and acknowledge the importance of social policy", showing "that it attaches equal importance to national unity, social improvement, and individual responsibility." Then "this new approach must be reflected in action and not just in words", and "the human aspect of unemployment must also be tackled." Unfair to select like this from among Mr Pym's many moderate and soothing propositions? But it is a little difficult to see how it adds up to anything more than a recommendation to present policies differently. Of course, he may have up his sleeve some firmly quantified scheme for diminishing unemployment, but there is no sign of it here. In practicality, such ideas even fall short of the Bishop of Lincoln's "judicious element of reflation by creating work in the infrastructure."

Of course, it is easy to ask for the spending of more money on creating employment and dealing with social problems. All anyone has to do is think of a number. As Senator Goldwater once put it, "A billion here and a billion there, and then you're getting into real money." Leaving aside the confusion by advocates of reflation of conjunctural with structural unemployment, they must also face the fact that such methods have not succeeded in the past, as the phenomenon of "stagflation" surely shows. Indeed, Mrs Thatcher is not alone in believing that present problems will not respond to a deluge of devalued currency. It is a point of view shared by, *inter alia*, the Finance Ministers of the European Community, Socialists among them.

In his conclusion, Mr Pym defines "the most important element of true Conservatism" as being "the sense of a unified nation." With this we return to the belief in "One Nation", the idea that runs through Conservative thought of what Lord Hailsham has called "the underlying unity of all classes of Englishmen." Has Mrs Thatcher broken that unity? Are her policies, in the words of so many of her opponents, "divisive"?

Certainly there are contrasts in contemporary Britain which suggest division: the decaying industrial North against the prosperous South, the inner cities against the wealthy suburbs, the remnants of 19th-century industry and the efficient high-technology enterprises of the late 20th century. When a nation is going through an economic and social transformation, it is unavoidable that some areas will change more quickly than others, adapting to new conditions and taking advantage of their own position or capacities. Its progress will

[13] *The Politics of Consent*. By FRANCIS PYM. Sphere Books, £2.95.

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be uneven and, to that extent, "divisive." When *Sibyl* was written, what Disraeli was describing was the rise of the north of England, its industrial development, and the stagnation of the rural domains of the "gentlemen of England." Now the old industrial areas are on their way down, and the shires and East Anglia are better placed than they. Such an upheaval was unavoidable. Earlier governments could have prepared for it, but they could not have stopped it. Mrs Thatcher is open to the charge of having speeded up change; and history alone will tell if she was right.

YET THIS MUCH CAN be said now. It is no part of English Conservatism to preserve society in a state of indefinite suspension. The present Administration was elected because a crisis, which had been looming over the country for twenty years or more, had suddenly become near and threatening. That Britain must earn its living in the world, both on the national and the individual level, is clear enough; and the consequent change of expectations is probably (as Lord Blake has pointed out) Mrs Thatcher's most important achievement. The Conservative Party on this occasion has had no alternative but to be "the party of change." But such a role must produce within it strains and nervous tensions of the kind which have recently broken into the open with Defence Minister Michael Heseltine's resignation from the Government—something of an exercise in hysteria. The majority of people do not like "change"; they wish to remain as they are. By a paradox, therefore, the emotion of natural conservatism could turn against a Conservative government. But it is no use longing for the quiet days of Harold Macmillan. There is no alternative to riding out the economic and social turmoil, and Mrs Thatcher is undoubtedly "a daring pilot in extremity."

She is also a pilot who has fundamentally altered the nature and course of the party she leads. Despite the backbiting and the rancour brought to light by her hesitancy over the Westland affair, the present Conservative Party is of her making, and attempts to shrug off her ten years of leadership will be vain indeed. There is no reversal of history possible, either for Britain or for the Conservative Party. Future political leaders will have to be careful not to lose the gains of "Thatcherism", if they wish to escape reversion to a reliance upon the state which throws into relief the impotence of government and the humiliation of the citizen. Whatever the success or failure of the policies of Mrs Thatcher's Administration (and no government's policy can ever be totally successful), they represent the one attempt to deal with the profound problems of British life which has been made since the War—something not to be discarded in a fit of party vapours and vexation.

When Disraeli died, Gladstone in the House of Commons drew attention to his "great parliamentary courage", and Lord Salisbury too singled out this virtue in him as a colleague. To make a final comparison, this is a quality which the present Prime Minister has never been accused of lacking. No doubt she will need it in the time ahead.

The Other Diaspora

Oriental Jews—By Ben Segal

FORTY YEARS AGO I visited the remote township of Tarhuna in Tripolitania, North Africa. Here in a vast underground burrow of caves lived a tribe of ragged Jewish troglodytes, their activities largely exposed to public view. They were the autochthonous population, the most impoverished and depressed of the social strata of Libyan Jewry. Superior to them, in the villages and urban areas—notably in the new town of Zawia and the ghettos of Tripoli—were other Arabic-speaking Jews, mainly artisans and petty hucksters. At the apex of this structured community were Italian-speaking Jews in their sophisticated villas in the Garden City of Tripoli; they hob-nobbed with the *Cavalieri* and the *Commendatori*, and their children had attended Italian schools until the *Duce*, under German pressure, reluctantly enforced the racist laws.

This threefold stratification of Libyan Jewry presented a paradigm of Jewries throughout North Africa and the Middle East. At the base stood the indigenous inhabitants; above them were the later arrivals who had come in the wake of Arab invasions or the vicissitudes of Ottoman rule; and finally there was the élite—the rich and the intellectuals, largely Europeanised, many of them having acquired foreign citizenship from Britain, France, or Italy.

Of the 38,000 Jews of Libya no more than a handful—perhaps fifteen souls—remain today in the clutches of Colonel Gaddafi. It was not only the allure and the inspiration of the new state of Israel that had led all the rest to abandon the land where some had been resident for centuries. (The Jewish population of Cyrenaica, the eastern province of Libya, preceded the Arabs by close on a millennium; they were established there by Ptolemy I, under the Romans they were numerous and powerful.) The warning

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signs were clear enough. In November 1945, near the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, there took place a pogrom (of which I was a horrified witness). Over a hundred Jews were slaughtered, and the British Military Administration was, some felt, slow to intervene. Five years later the sullen enmity again burst into flames. Arab mobs fell upon the Jews of Tripoli; this time the latter were forearmed, and beat off the rioters with the loss of no more than a few lives.

In December 1950 the rumour flew around the Jewish community that a vessel was standing off the coast of Tripoli, ready to transport the Jews to Israel. In the sand-coloured city of Homs we celebrated the annual Festival of Lights. The bright-eyed children walked past me, two by two, intoning in Hebrew: "*Mattay yavo torenu*"—"When will our turn come?" The report of an Israeli ship proved to be false, but a year or so later the turn of these children had indeed arrived; they were secure in transit camps in the new land of Israel. The ancient Jewish community of Libya had disappeared.

The same course of events was enacted, with local variations, throughout North Africa and the Middle East. From Morocco in the west to the mountains of Kurdistan in the east and Yemen and India in the south, the Jews converged on Israel in their tens of thousands. This was veritably a latter-day Exodus—although now they did not despoil the Egyptians, but left their own possessions behind. It was more a homecoming than a migration. It invites comparison with the mass-movements of population in history, but now these surging migrants were not looking backward in fear, but forward in hope.

THE GREAT ALIYAH (immigration) of Oriental Jewries to Israel forms the last part of *The Road from Babylon*, Chaim Raphael's absorbing and scholarly volume,[1] but his panorama is much broader. Although he has compressed his account of the travails and the triumphs of Oriental Jewries within the brief space of 270 pages, the range of his vivid narrative is immense. It opens with ancient Sumer and Akkad and the exploits of Abraham; it closes with a penetrating analysis of the contemporary Israeli scene under the coalition government of Shimon Peres.

The subtitle of Raphael's book is *The Story of Sephardi and Oriental Jews*, and here we immediately encounter a problem of definition. The term "Sephardi" is used properly of the Jews of the Iberian peninsula. After the Expulsion of 1492, they wandered far and wide to join the communities of North Africa and Asia, and were granted generous hospitality by the Ottoman régime. In their baggage they carried with them Ladino, their own form of Spanish. With their native intelligence, their experience and their courtly manners, they created an élite group in many a Jewish congregation. But they did not thereby make the whole congregation Sephardi. Indeed, the meaning of this term varies with the context in which it is used.

In the 16th century the Yemeni poet-philosopher Zech-

[1] *The Road from Babylon: The Story of Sephardi and Oriental Jews*. By CHAIM RAPHAEL. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.95.

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ariah al-Dahri can write of the "congregation of Sephardim" whom he met at Cochin in Southern India. That does not imply that he is opposing them to Ashkenazim, Jews of Russian or German descent. He is referring to the so-called "White" Jews whose forebears came to Cochin from (probably) Iraq or Yemen. And he contrasts them with "other congregations, proselytes from early times of the Cochinis and the Canaanites"—that is, the "Black" Jews of Cochin, the offspring of marriage between Jews and Indian women, whom another writer calls "Malabari", after the name of that region. Possibly, too, al-Dahri's "Sephardim" spoke Portuguese, the language of their Christian rulers.

As so often in Jewish affairs—as, indeed, with the title "Jew"—the most exact definition of the term "Sephardi" is to be found in a religious setting. There are differences—albeit minor differences—between the *nusach* (order of synagogue service) of Ashkenazim on the one hand and of Sephardim on the other. The rites of the latter are common not only to the Sephardim of Europe and America (where the majority of Jews are Ashkenazim), but also to the bulk of eastern Jewry (where there are few Ashkenazim). Yet this does not resolve the quandary; we have no simple method of packaging and labelling Jewish communities. For there is a sharp distinction between the attitudes of mind and the way of life of the Jews of Europe and America and those of Asia and North Africa. Israelis call the latter *edot hamizrach*, communities of the East, whether or not they are to be dubbed Sephardi. It is a distinction that is reflected in more intense perspective between the followers of Western Christianity and the followers of Islam, and derives from differences of historical and cultural tradition and centuries-old systems of education—not to mention differences of climate and ethnosociology.

CHAIM RAPHAEL RECOUNTS with zest and clarity the glories of Jewish Spain and Portugal where the story of the Sephardim began. Helpfully, he underlines the symbiosis of Christian and Moslem and Jewish thought in the region. The contribution of both Moslems and Christians was the more liberal and perhaps the more poignant because in Spain both communities lived on the periphery of their world. So too did the Jews, for the centre of Jewish learning was not the cities of Toledo or Granada but far-away Babylonia, and the mainspring of Jewish religious emotions was, of course, Palestine. This is exquisitely expressed in Judah Halevi (translated by T. Carmi):

> "My heart is in the East, and I am at the edge of the West. Then how can I taste what I eat, how can I enjoy it? How can I fulfil my vows and pledges, while Zion is in the domain of Edom, and I am in the bonds of Arabia? It would be easy for me to leave behind all the good things of Spain; it would be glorious to see the dust of the ruined Shrine."

Poetic tradition has it that Judah met his death as he arrived at Jerusalem and approached the Temple site.

This was a lively and enormously creative, if not always a carefree, period of Jewish history. Philosophers, poets, commentators—as well as warriors—were remarkably free of inhibition. They lived life to the full. They had too something of the common touch, as we discover from the *muwashahat* of Ibn Gabirol, Halevi, and others. These couplets, written in vernacular Spanish or Arabic, appear as tailpieces to poems; they celebrate in lascivious and witty rhyme the beauties of the beloved. For there was in Spanish Jewry a light-hearted, easy abandon—and this gallantry and bravado somehow flourished more freely in the Christian West than in the Moslem East. In the West the sparkle of the Sephardi genius survived to the 19th century. George Eliot has caught its spirit in Daniel Deronda, and it is reflected in the indefatigable travels of that Victorian Jewish gentleman Moses Montefiore, but it is at its most incisive in the flamboyant phrases and gaudy waistcoats of Benjamin Disraeli, who won *entrée* into the houses of the gentry like his nomad ancestors four centuries earlier.

It was not by chance that when European adventurers penetrated the Moslem world in the 19th century the process was in some measure accelerated by the English Sephardi Disraeli with his purchase of the Suez Canal. Western involvement took strange turns—an insult to a Gibraltarian Jew from the Bey of Tunis (who objected to his European head-dress) prompted Palmerston to call out the English fleet—but the direct pressure of Western power in the Orient had a far-reaching effect on the lives of the Jews of the area. There was a new and provocative alignment. By the *décret Crémieux*, Jews in North Africa were encouraged to opt for French nationality; the same inducements were offered by France's European rivals. Competition between the Western powers to win over Christian and Jewish residents in the Middle East was intense. In these present times, with our mean obsession over laws of citizenship, it is amusing to read of consuls in the Middle East a century ago touting offers of British or French passports.

The gulf between the European-minded, and usually European-educated, Jew and his more conservative fellow-congregants grew wide throughout the Ottoman empire. Language played a considerable part in this estrangement. Progressive youths studied at schools sponsored by Jews of France, Britain, or Germany, while the bulk of the community was content with Arabic, the tongue of the Moslem majority. Too often the natural leaders of the Jewish community were alienated, and abandoned their traditional obligation to guide and direct.

MORE SERIOUS was the rift created between Jew and Moslem. Conscious of the tantalising attractions of Western society, Oriental Jews became increasingly resentful of the discriminatory laws of the *sharia* (the Moslem code). That their status was formally recognised was little compensation for the moral and physical disabilities under which they laboured.[2] Moreover, as foreign interven-

[2] Bernard Lewis has described their condition admirably in *The Jews of Islam* (1984), and a fine analysis of the situation in medieval times is given by Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam: Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century* (1984).

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tion in the Middle East was relaxed, not even their daily life was secure for Jews. There arose petty autocratic régimes that sought to shore up their power with Western techniques. Fundamentalist Islam has little place for religious minorities —and mob violence is never far away. Small wonder that in an age of strident and competing nationalisms, Oriental Jews are seeking their own identity in Israel, in a corner of the Middle East where they hope to develop their own traditions and conventions.

For the first generation of Oriental Jews in the new state of Israel, life was not easy, as Raphael describes in a perceptive postscript to his book. The Oriental Jews who preceded them in Palestine were few in number; some had been in the country for many years, some had come more recently from Yemen or Kurdistan. The Eastern communities who arrived after 1948 were received by the Ashkenazim with warmth, but also with apprehension. Jews of the *edot hamizrach* were accustomed to a mode of society out of keeping with that of the new country. Would these newcomers—now a majority of the population of Israel and with a higher rate of natural increase—accept the norms of Western liberalism? It was a miracle that the young state had adopted with such ease and conviction not only the trappings but also the spirit of a free democracy. Would the Arabic-speaking immigrants set this at risk?

Raphael's analysis is reassuring. The natural antagonisms and irritations between Eastern and Western Jews have softened, largely through intermarriage. The administrative and social machinery may creak at times, and it may seem to falter on occasion. But there is little doubt that Israel will remain united for the future, not for the negative reason of self-defence but for the positive reason that the democratic way of life has been tried and has been found satisfactory.

In a world that moves so rapidly and so unpredictably it is, of course, hazardous to seek to look into the future. But may we now speak of the whole *Yishuv* (the Jews of Israel) as an Oriental Jewry? In another two generations, who will ask whether their ancestors came from New York or Fez or Berlin or Bombay? Israelis have come to terms with their past. We see it in the fine Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv. We see it also in the present revival of interest in Yiddish. (One can now recall without agitation how the supporters of Hebrew clashed daily and violently with the supporters of Yiddish in the streets of Palestine in the 1920s.) More significant is the concern over the teaching of Arabic in Jewish schools in Israel.

History is ever-changing, but geography is—dare one say this in a nuclear-conscious universe threatened by SDI?—relatively stable. Fifty years from now Israel will still be a Jewish enclave in the Arab milieu, and it will draw its strength from the Oriental Jews who have always been at home in this region of Asia.

Tito's Land, Tito's Legacy

Myths & Counter-Myths—By CHRISTOPHER CVIIĆ

WESTERN WORRYING about Yugoslavia predates the Tito régime. In January 1929, King Alexander took dictatorial powers in the wake of the death of Stjepan Radić—the Croat Peasant Party leader who had been shot by a Montenegrin deputy in the National Assembly in Belgrade (two other Croat deputies were killed and two injured). Some sixteen months later R. W. Seton-Watson, Britain's and probably Europe's leading authority on Yugoslavia, in whose formation in 1918 he had played an important role, prepared a long private memorandum about the situation. In this document with a limited circulation, he did not mince words; he called the King's step "disastrous" and catalogued in merciless detail the brutalities of the King's police since 1929.

Seton-Watson's outspokenness upset the newly-appointed British Minister in Belgrade, Nevile Henderson (who later became Ambassador to Germany). He wrote to Seton-Watson that he was distressed by such excessive pessimism, and pointed to what he thought were fragments of silver lining on the horizon. "In view of the ghastly mess into which the Parliamentary régime had brought the country", he did not see what other course the King could have followed. As for evils such as press censorship, he was for its abolition, but it had to be remembered that "Communism is a serious menace here in the Balkans where life is cheap and assassination a recognised procedure."

Seton-Watson responded courteously. He understood why the Minister was taking this line, but for his part he had a "positive duty to be frank and critical and not merely to endorse any fresh folly on the part of our friends." He reaffirmed his pessimism.

Henderson replied by calling on Seton-Watson to refrain from writing "articles which might be calculated to indispose the British public against Jugoslavia." He explained that he was "most anxious that Jugoslavia should succeed in raising a loan this autumn of an international character on the London market." It might be "the making" of the country. If the

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London effort fell through, the loan would come from France, which was most anxious to lend the money. Among other consequences, Britain would "get none of the economic advantages . . . which should result from the solution of Jugoslavia's difficulties through a loan raised under British auspices."

Ignoring Henderson's clear hint not to rock the boat, Seton-Watson published a real stinker of an article in *Lidové Noviny* (a liberal Czechoslovak newspaper, published in Brno). A friend from Zagreb wrote to him shortly afterwards: Henderson was furious about the article, and the King had complained.[1]

The King was assassinated by a Macedonian terrorist five years later; the eminent scholar died after a distinguished academic and journalistic career, at the age of 72.

In the matter of Yugoslavia, *plus ça change*. . . .

WHEN THE Communist Party of Yugoslavia was expelled from the *Cominform* (the newly set up European successor to the disbanded *Comintern*) on 28 June 1948, informed opinion in the West reacted with a mixture of total astonishment and deep scepticism. As Alan Bullock relates in the third volume of his biography of Ernest Bevin,[2] the British Foreign Office's line was one of extreme caution. It is easy to see why.

Here were Stalin's European henchmen accusing Yugoslavia's ruling Communist Party of a variety of ideological and political sins, including the pursuit of an "anti-party, anti-Soviet line, incompatible with Marxism-Leninism", and warning the erring leaders that continuation on their present course could only lead to "Yugoslavia's degeneration into an ordinary bourgeois republic, to the loss of its independence, and to its transformation into a colony of the imperialist countries."

This was not how it looked in the West. Ever since the Tito régime had assumed power in Yugoslavia in 1945, it had taken a strong aggressive anti-Western attitude over a whole range of issues, from Austria and Trieste to Albania and Greece. Bevin, in his capacity as Britain's Foreign Secretary, had had to sit through endless anti-Western tirades by Milovan Djilas and other senior Yugoslav delegates at the Paris Peace Conference and in the United Nations. Even after Yugoslavia's expulsion from the *Cominform*, there was no sign of its anti-Western militancy abating. And so, in his survey of the foreign situation for the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, Bevin wrote in July that it would be wrong to read too much into the latest Russian-Yugoslav exchanges, which looked more like a family quarrel than a sign that in Eastern Europe the Communist empire was crumbling.

Within a year, Bevin had changed his mind. At a meeting in Washington in September 1949, with his American and French counterparts, Dean Acheson and Robert Schuman, he reacted with characteristic precision and bluntness to the news that the Yugoslavs were inquiring about aid and dollar loans from the Americans. Bevin was all for it. "Tito may be a scoundrel", he said, "but he's our scoundrel."

The others agreed. This was the start of the extraordinary Western consensus about Yugoslavia that has persisted to this day. In the eyes of Western politicians, diplomats, military men, media men, bankers, academics and even churchmen, Yugoslavia became a Good Thing—with blemishes, certainly, but with many more good points.

The consensus has transcended party divisions. It takes in Right-wing Republicans like Lawrence Eagleburger American Ambassador in Yugoslavia from 1977-81, and Left-wing Social Democrats like Willy Brandt. The Right sees Yugoslavia as an instrument for bashing the main enemy—Russia—on the old principle that my enemy's enemy is my friend. For the Left, Yugoslavia has been a potential and hopeful source of socialist renewal and rehabilitation. This was particularly true during the Cold War years when what has aptly been called *Europa's heimatslose Linke*—Europe's homeless Left—was searching for a new ideological model and thought it had found it. Tito was of course a great draw during his lifetime, but the Western consensus has survived him, to the despair of Yugoslavia's small opposition movement and parts of the exiled Yugoslav communities.

IT IS THIS CONSENSUS that Nora Beloff sets out to challenge in *Tito's Flawed Legacy*.[3] Miss Beloff was for 27 years on the staff of *The Observer*, and in 1964 became the paper's chief political correspondent. After her retirement in 1977, she started travelling the Communist countries, and in 1979 visited Yugoslavia for the first time, was intrigued by it, and decided to study it more closely. In 1984, just as she had completed this book, the Yugoslavs expelled her for "hostile propaganda." In the intervening period, however, she had seen a lot of people—those in official positions as well as members of the opposition and ordinary citizens—and she has read a good deal. To challenge the consensus single-handed is a formidable task, especially for one who is not a professional historian and has none of the Yugoslav languages; but she has had a lot of help—particularly from Yugoslav scholars living in the West—though none, as she proudly stresses, from Western Foreign Ministries.

Nora Beloff's main thesis is that the West has got Yugoslavia wrong, that a radical reassessment of Tito and of Yugoslavia's wartime and post-War history is needed. She calls for a more hard-headed Western policy:

> "The support which the West has given the Yugoslav Communist régime, year in, year out, in word and in deed, has gained it neither popular esteem nor an effective Yugoslav government nor a solvent Yugoslav economy."

The worst of the present policy, she argues, is that it confounds the West's friends in Yugoslavia, and comforts its enemies.

All this wrong-headedness, says Miss Beloff, can be

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[1] *R. W. Seton-Watson and the Yugoslavs: Correspondence 1906-1941* (Zagreb and London, 1976).

[2] *Ernest Bevin*. By ALAN BULLOCK. Oxford University Press, £12.50.

[3] *Tito's Flawed Legacy: Yugoslavia and the West, 1939-1984*. By NORA BELOFF. Gollancz, £12.95.

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summed under seven headings ("myths"): that Tito was a Yugoslav patriot and a political visionary; that his Partisans liberated Yugoslavia in 1944-45; that the Partisans were friends of the Western Allies; that Yugoslav Communists stopped being Stalinists after Stalin expelled them from his *Cominform*; that Yugoslavia's non-aligned foreign policy was truly even-handed between East and West; that Tito had managed to solve the "nationalities" question; and, finally, that the self-management system created under Tito represents a middle way between Capitalism and Communism.

A reassessment of Tito and Titoism is certainly necessary. In Yugoslavia, the official Titoist version of events has for long been the only one allowed; and in the West, too (perhaps inevitably), it is that side which has chiefly been heard. Yugoslavia's present financial, economic, and political crisis also calls for a fresh look, preferably by someone not associated with the prevailing consensus.

Since Miss Beloff insists that her book is primarily about Western policy towards Yugoslavia rather than about Yugoslavia itself, any assessment of it must also concentrate on that aspect. However, any judgment on the correctness or otherwise of Western policy during the past four decades must take in the men running Yugoslavia, and their policies, so a few general comments are in order.

INSIDE YUGOSLAVIA there was, long before Tito's death in 1980, plenty of evidence of a widespread yearning to learn the full, bare truth about what really happened during the 1941-45 period and after, with many members of the ruling establishment awaiting a chance to spill the beans. It was clear that de-Titoisation would continue to face great problems, even though Tito was no longer around. The régime had from the start based its claim to legitimacy on the proposition that the Partisans who had set up the new Tito Yugoslavia in 1945 were morally and in every way superior to their wartime rivals for power: in other words, the Partisans did not merely win power, but deserved to win it and, by implication, to rule Yugoslavia ever after. It was on the cards that under Tito's successors there would continue to be a good deal of resistance to anything which might threaten seriously to undermine the régime's self-legitimising myth. Because the debate would not (and could not) be completely open, there would be a danger of political manipulation. And so it has proved.

Six years after Tito's death, de-Titoisation is in full swing—though nobody is allowed to say so publicly. It is a messy, often very dirty, and always heavily politicised process. Amazingly, some excellent scholarly work has been published, but much of the time the debate is not about past history but on present politics. It can be summed up in Lenin's famous slogan, "Who whom?" There is nothing funny or frivolous about it: real political interests are at stake, and there is much settling of old personal scores.

For the outsider, the subject presents special difficulties, because the debate is conducted in a sort of code which it is essential to crack before one can get at the actual problem of "*wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*"—how it really happened. Miss Beloff has managed to absorb and digest a good deal of the material that has been published in Yugoslavia in the past few years or is available for private inspection. She relies a good deal, however, on the work of Vladimir Dedijer, Tito's wartime associate and first biographer, who has emerged as one of the main protagonists in this process with two massive volumes—further contributions to his best-selling Tito volume of 1954, which was translated into many languages.

The Dedijer volumes make fascinating reading, and are undoubtedly important because of the amount of fresh material they provide; but as an historical source they need to be treated with great caution, not least because of Dedijer's many bitter feuds with (among others) most of the British he had dealings with, and with Milovan Djilas, once his friend, on whose work Miss Beloff also draws. She has talked to and read the books by a number of Western participants (both pro- and anti-Tito) in wartime events in Yugoslavia.

In her chapters dealing with the pre-1945 period, which take up nearly half of the book, she argues that Tito, the much lauded anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist Resistance hero, was mainly interested in fighting his domestic enemies and rivals, but managed to hoodwink Churchill into believing that he alone was fighting the common enemy. His chief rival, the Serbian General Draža Mihailović, leader of the Royalist Chetnik guerrillas, was, she thinks, unfairly pushed aside by the Western allies. (He was captured by the Tito forces after the end of the War, brought to trial on charges of treason, and executed in 1946.)

WHAT SORT OF contribution did the Tito Partisans really make to the Allied cause by tying down Axis forces? The Partisans' claim that they single-handedly liberated Yugoslavia certainly needs re-examination, particularly with regard to the Soviet contribution in northern Yugoslavia in 1944-45. It is, of course, a fair point that Tito's first priority was victory in his own revolutionary war, and the war against the Axis merely secondary. He gave good evidence of this when he offered the Germans a temporary truce, in anticipation of an Allied landing in the Balkans which would (as Tito clearly, and probably correctly, calculated) have strengthened the position of the Chetniks and the other anti-Communist forces at the Partisans' expense. Certainly this was how things happened in Greece after the British landing in 1944.

Tito, in the end, made no deal with the Germans, and Hitler, when he heard what was going on, vetoed further negotiations. "One does not negotiate with rebels", he is reported (by a German source) to have said: "Rebels must be shot." The episode has been described and analysed by several writers in the past decade or so, notably by the American historian Walter Roberts, in *Tito, Mihailović and the Allies, 1941-45* (1973), and by Milovan Djilas in his wartime memoirs. Hotly denied in Yugoslavia during Tito's lifetime, the story has since been confirmed by Dedijer, among others.

If Tito calculated with an eye to eventual victory over his domestic enemies, what of Mihailović? In an effort to topple Tito from his pedestal, Miss Beloff goes too far in the

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opposite direction, running the risk of putting Mihailović there in Tito's stead. This is a pity. There *is* a case for a calmer look at Mihailović, who has been vilified by Titoist propaganda as a quisling and a traitor; and in fact a quiet reassessment is underway in Serbia.

THE MOST REMARKABLE instance of the new, "revisionist" writing about Mihailović is a book published in Belgrade in the early autumn of 1985.[4] Its author, Veselin Djuretić, pleads for a more balanced and charitable approach towards Mihailović—and the Serbs in general. In his view, Mihailović, a genuine anti-Fascist but also a romantic Serbian nationalist, was pushed into collaboration with the occupying powers because, when the chips were down, he felt it was more important to save Serbian lives than fight the Germans and the Italians.

He had too many scruples. In contrast, the Partisans, under Tito's "cunning" revolutionary leadership, had no such scruples. Djuretić goes on to suggest that it was in fact "extremist" Communist policies, such as the premature and ill-judged proclamation of the Communist Užice Republic in western Serbia in the autumn of 1941, and the subsequent heavy German reprisals against the Serbian population, that led the people, and the Chetniks, to take a "more responsible" (in other words, less militant) attitude towards the occupation forces.

The Mihailović that emerges from Djuretić's book is a decent chap—simply not up to the clever and ruthless Tito, who also had the advantage of Stalin's full backing (contrary to what the Yugoslav propaganda later claimed). In contrast, Mihailović was weighed down by his link via the Royalist government in London (whose Minister of War he was) to the fickle British.

Launched at a party in the Serbian Academy of Sciences attended by more than 500 people (including leading Serbian intellectuals), the book has since been fiercely attacked in the officially-controlled press. Last November, its author was expelled from the Party. The experts, including a Partisan war hero, who passed the book for publication have been similarly punished. But the public in Serbia loved the book: two printings were sold out within a day or two of its appearance in the bookshops.

Intriguingly, in view of the complex relationship between the Serbs and the Croats, Mihailović appears to have defenders even in Croatia. In his recently published memoirs,[5] Josip Hrnčević, a pre-War Communist from Croatia, who served as a federal public prosecutor during the 1946-51 period, describes Mihailović at his trial in terms which come close to being sympathetic. Mihailović gave the impression of being "a capable military commander, a mature political opponent and an educated man." He replied to all questions "seriously and quickly", looking "more like an academic than a leader of the Chetniks and their supreme commander."

The way to persuade people to reassess Mihailović is to stop going on about him as a Yugoslav super-patriot, a 100% loyal ally of the West cruelly abandoned by Churchill, as Miss Beloff seems to be trying to do—contrasting him with Tito, a tricky character and a bad Yugoslav. It makes more sense to try and look at him as Djuretić does: simply as a good Serb who did not like the Germans but above all wanted to do his best for his people. All Serbs remember the heavy casualties their country endured in the First World War, before the Allies, coming from the direction of Salonika, liberated it from the Austrian occupation in 1918. It is reasonable to assume that this would have played a role with Mihailović. Since another Allied victory seemed certain from pretty early on, it made sense for him to sit back, keeping his powder dry for an uprising when the imminent liberation offered an opportunity to concentrate on local enemies—the Partisans, the Croat *ustaše*, and the Albanian and Bosnian Moslem militias. Accepting this logic, there was everything to be said for the Chetniks making deals with the occupation forces.

Unfortunately for the Chetniks, that sort of reasoning did not fit in with the Western Allies' demand for military action—and this involved the risk of German retaliation, which threatened to destroy whole villages and ultimately the old Royalist order that the Chetniks were trying to preserve. Tito—as Djuretić points out—had no such scruples: a seasoned revolutionary, he knew that reprisals brought new recruits. How much fighting did he do? Not as much as the legend claims, but he was able to deliver what the Allies wanted. Miss Beloff writes that Tito forces were providing "sporadic and limited support for the military operations which Middle East Command were conducting against the Axis." Perhaps, but the point is that Tito did what was required. The Chetniks did not. In addition, Tito demonstrated that he could lead not just one Yugoslav nationality, but all of them—unlike Mihailović, whose forces consisted almost exclusively of Serbs. And so it was to Tito, though reluctantly, that the Allies gave their help.

IN RETROSPECT, of course, it is clear that the Western Allies—which in this case really means the British—should have taken a broader view and displayed closer interest in the political colouring of the guerrillas to whom they were sending arms. But in the middle of the War, the military factor triumphed—in the Balkans just as in Malaya, where the British armed local Communists during the war against Japan only to find themselves fighting their erstwhile protégés a few years later during the Malayan Emergency.

What would have happened if the British had "seen through" Tito, refused his demands for aid, and instead decided to help Mihailović? If they had followed this up with a landing on the Adriatic coast, and full military occupation once the Germans had been driven out, the Tito forces would probably have been defeated, as the Greek Communists were defeated. But there might have been a bitter civil war, as in Greece. On the other hand, without an Allied landing, the Tito forces would still have won even without Western aid. They would have required even more help from the Russians,

[4] *Saveznici i jugoslovenska ratna drama*. By VESELIN DJURETIĆ. Narodna knjiga i Balkanološki institut Sanu (Belgrade, 1985).

[5] *Svjedočanstva*. By JOSIP HRNČEVIĆ. Globus (Zagreb, 1984).

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though, with the result that the post-War Tito régime might have been less independent-minded, less ready and able to defy Stalin in 1948. All that is speculation, but what can be said with some certainty is that it was not the British who put Tito into power. He put himself there. The idea that the West—i.e. Churchill—stabbed Mihailović in the back is at best an alibi for a defeat that would have happened anyway.

What of Yugoslav foreign policy after the 1948 breach with Stalin? There is something to be said for the view that the peoples of Yugoslavia did not get much out of their great leader's involvement in the affairs of the Third World. During all the years of its active involvement in the non-aligned grouping, Yugoslavia received no tangible commercial advantages to justify all the expenditure. Even now, less than a quarter of Yugoslav trade is with the Third World. During the various oil shocks since 1973, there has been no preferential treatment from the Arab oil states which Yugoslavia has so fervently backed in the United Nations and elsewhere. Sales of arms bring substantial profits, according to high Yugoslav army authorities, but then you do not need to be non-aligned to sell arms to the Third World.

This is not Miss Beloff's case against Tito-style non-alignment. It is true that she does not go as far as the *KGB* defector Anatoly Golitsyn, who suggests that after Tito's initial clash with Stalin the subsequent rows were no more than a part of a giant disinformation campaign. But she does imply that what she describes as Tito's anti-Western policies, aimed at the spread of Communist régimes throughout the world, have fitted quite well into the Kremlin's scheme of things, despite occasional tiffs between Belgrade and Moscow. In that sense, she says, the Soviet leadership was quite right to name a Moscow square after Tito, that "eminent combatant for the communist and workers' movement."

She goes further than that. Not content with ticking Tito off—and quite rightly, too—for his support of Soviet intervention in Hungary in November 1956, she actually accuses him of implicit support for the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine: the proposition, put forward at the time of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invasion and occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968, that the Soviet Union has the right to intervene militarily to preserve a Communist régime. In his first statement after the invasion, Tito said (21 August 1968) that the Dubček leadership "was determined to prevent any attempt by anti-socialist elements to hinder the normal socialist development of Czechoslovakia." Nora Beloff, however, takes this to mean that if Communism was at risk in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union was entitled to intervene. She then quotes from a further speech by Tito, made at the Party Congress in March 1969, but omits to mention his quite explicit and unambiguous rejection of the Brezhnev Doctrine: the invasion, he said, had "violated the independence of a sovereign state" and was "completely at odds with the generally accepted principles of international law."[6]

Yugoslavia has on a number of occasions found itself at odds with the Western powers, notably in the Middle East in 1967 and 1973, but also at the time of the Russian nuclear test during the Belgrade conference in 1961, and so on. However, it is also true—as Miss Beloff admits—that Tito personally stood up to Cuba's attempts to take over the leadership of the non-aligned grouping on behalf of the Soviet Union. He may have done so for his own reasons, but objectively (to use a Marxist expression) his stand was in the interests of the West. It has to be said that in this chapter, one of the weakest in the book, the author displays a polemical stance which is quite counterproductive. A more *nuancé* analysis of Yugoslavia's foreign policy is needed.

[6] See *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union 1939-1973*, ed. Stephen Clissold (1975), p. 299.

Well, has the West got a really bad bargain in Yugoslavia, as Miss Beloff so passionately argues? It is true that, contrary to the *Cominform*'s worst fears, Yugoslavia has not become "an ordinary bourgeois republic." Not by a long chalk: it is a one-party state with a strong and active secret police, and its human-rights record is actually worse than that of some Warsaw Pact states, notably its neighbour, Hungary. It has not lost its independence to the West, let alone become "a colony of the imperialist countries." Under Tito and after him it has remained sturdily independent.

But six years after Tito's death Yugoslavia is in a real mess. It has 80%-plus inflation, a huge foreign debt, and more than a million unemployed. The nationalities question has not

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been solved, nor has the self-management system proved to be an instrument of the workers' liberation or an aid to efficiency. However, most of its citizens can travel freely to the West, though this right cannot be taken for granted. The churches are not free, but they at least have internal freedom, unlike the churches in most Warsaw Pact countries. An ordinary citizen can end up in jail for singing the wrong song, as Miss Beloff has noticed, but there is hardly anything that cannot be questioned, even attacked—though if at the wrong time, in the wrong place, the result could be serious for a questioner-attacker. In the general atmosphere of lawlessness and arbitrariness the final outcome may be less harsh and unpleasant than might at first have been expected—though it can be a lot worse if you are an Albanian "irredentist", for example, or a Croatian "separatist", or if you happen to be undergoing trial and sentence in an illiberal republic like Bosnia or Hercegovina.

SHOULD THE WEST have become involved in Yugoslavia in the first place? An academic question, admittedly, but the answer can only be—yes, of course. The Tito-Stalin row, that first crack in the Communist monolith, was a chance too good to be missed.

The Tito years and what has followed have done something for the peoples of Yugoslavia—certainly more than the years of President Ceausescu's semi-independent policy in the foreign sphere have done for the people of Romania. But none of the liberal gains are really solid: everything is still reversible. Many of the most talented (and pro-Western) party leaders were removed by President Tito in the purges of 1971-72, at the end of Yugoslavia's most liberal period. In Eastern Europe, the pull of the Yugoslav model is not what it was. Rather, its economic failures are seen by reform-minded elements as "an awful warning."

Could the West have done more to produce tangible and permanent results? The clear implication of *Tito's Flawed Legacy* is that it could and should, particularly in terms of help and encouragement for the internal process of liberalisation, and that it should do so now. In principle, this may be (and probably is) right. If illiberal acts within Yugoslavia over the years had provoked a consistent and strong Western response, like those for example to breaches of the Helsinki Final Act in Warsaw Pact countries, there would have been results. Instead, the West often chose to overlook the misdeeds of the Tito régime because—unlike those of Czechoslovakia or Bulgaria or the Soviet Union—they were the misdeeds of "our scoundrel." A policy of double standards was in operation, and to a certain extent still is. At the recent Ottawa Conference reviewing the human-rights policies of governments taking part in the Helsinki process, Yugoslavia got off without a mention, while the big Western guns—notably American—blazed away at Russia and its henchmen.

A rather tougher policy, using economic leverage and threats of social and scientific boycott, is what Miss Beloff suggests to force Yugoslavia's compliance. Economic sanctions are notoriously difficult to get right, as recent experience has shown, even where a market economy like that of South Africa is concerned. The group under pressure may choose a state of siege rather than what it regards as political suicide. Though it is unlikely that the Yugoslav leadership would be prepared to go into Albanian-style isolation if the West switched off the financial tap, a hard-line backlash is gathering momentum against IMF-imposed economic measures such as the sliding exchange rate, high interest rates, and other measures designed to help Yugoslavia achieve some sort of financial and economic equilibrium. This illustrates the likely reaction of a number of Yugoslav leaders if overtly political concessions were to be demanded as a *quid pro quo* for continued financial and economic aid.

It may be that these hard-liners sounding off against IMF-style "colonialism" are just bluffing, in order to persuade the West to adopt a lenient attitude and shell out more money towards Yugoslavia's salvation. But with their backs to the wall, the Yugoslav leaders might one day decide—perhaps even with the agreement of "liberal" elements in the Party—that the price of Western support is too heavy, and that a policy of self-sufficiency backed by tougher internal controls might be preferable.

A more interventionist Western policy would face another problem, which is perhaps the most serious of all. Yugoslavia is not a homogeneous country; and it is now more divided along national lines than ever in its history, except perhaps during the last War. Its nations have very different aspirations, and these are hard to reconcile. For example, the experience of the 1966-71 liberalisation shows that any political change which encourages a loosening of the federation worries and upsets even the most liberal member of one particular Yugoslav nation—the Serbs. Should Yugoslavia turn into a loose confederation of small states, this would threaten to split the Serbs into their main body in Serbia proper, the sections in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, and Serbia's own autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina. The Serbs want a tighter, not a looser Yugoslavia. They are deeply preoccupied with the province of Kosovo, once the centre of Serbia's medieval kingdom, but now under an Albanian majority which seems anxious for the remaining Serbian minority to leave as soon as possible.

For most of Yugoslavia's non-Serbs, however, liberalisation is meaningless if it does not confirm the federal structure and the autonomy of the individual republic. Even the most liberal elements among the non-Serbian population appear to mistrust even the most liberal Serbs. The Serbs' liberalism is suspected of extending only so far as rights for Serbs are concerned. By increasingly basing their power and legitimacy on their role as advocates and protectors of the national interest of individual republics, Communist leaders have themselves gradually become prisoners of these conflicting nationalisms.

Any real liberalisation would be bound to reopen the question of revising the Constitution and even the frontiers of the individual federal republics. Even in a free society with political parties and other forms of representation, that sort of change is difficult but can be managed. For a single-party Yugoslavia, with its multinational character, it is—even on

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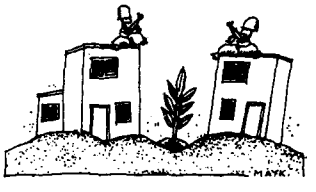
paper—a more complicated proposition. Of course, as an independent country not subject to Soviet-bloc discipline, Yugoslavia can embark on almost any internal changes that it likes, but its divisions mean in effect that serious liberalisation is possible only within each one of the individual republics. For example, the further development of pluralism in an already remarkably liberal Slovenia is not blocked for ever by an illiberal Bosnia; a liberal Serbia need not worry about the growth of Slovene "isolationism." The process of "confederalisation" is in fact going ahead all the time, but there are powerful pressures, under cover of calls for greater rationality of economic management, for a return to centralism in the Party and the state. Resistance is mobilised around the slogan—that code again—of faithfulness to Tito and his federal and self-management system. Much of the particularly strong backlash against Tito which Miss Beloff echoes in some of her strictures arises from the Serbs' deep anger at his supposed parcelling-out of Serbia in 1944-45.

Yugoslavia needs circumspect treatment by the West. For an outsider to intervene in this internal ferment is extremely risky, and it may be that a particular intervention could achieve an effect precisely opposite to that intended. A move to achieve supposed rationality could strengthen central authoritarianism. In fact, there is little chance that Western governments will involve themselves in any restructuring of the political and economic system. For one thing, there is the possible Russian reaction. For another, there is no powerful constituency like the Polish or Jewish vote in the United States to push the West into action. More important, there is the question of what to put in the place of what is there now. Not surprisingly, the *status quo* remains preferable to Western policy-makers, who worry far more about Greece, for example.

This book is unlikely to change many minds. Indeed, it may close some because of its polemical tone and black-and-white presentation. But it has one great merit. It has raised the questions—those which it intended to raise, and others too. The answers are still to come.

Strengths & Weaknesses

On the Lebanese War—By DAVID SPANIER



LEBANON HAS BECOME the tragic symbol of international affairs in our time. Here was a country which was, by all accounts, content with its lot, making a way of life for itself despite the many internal strains caused by a population divided 50/50 by religion; economically viable, thanks to a flourishing entrepôt trade and clever banking; a country subject, if you like, to most of the ills the body politic is heir to, a touch corrupt, given to over-indulgence, "playground of the rich": in a word, Levantine. Above all, Lebanon was not doing any harm to any of its neighbours. In fact its lack of political direction was something of a byword in the region.

What went wrong? Well, everything went wrong, as we know. The crucially destabilising factor was the infiltration of Lebanon by the Palestine Liberation Organisation as a state within a State; the proximate cause of the collapse of Lebanon as a State was the Israeli campaign *Operation Galilee*. Again, as everyone knows, what was advertised as a 48-hour cleaning-up operation to secure Israel's northern border turned into a protracted military campaign, whose after-effects are still being felt day by day. The best account of the political wheeler-dealing that went on in Israel throughout that time is *Israel's Lebanon War*, by Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari.[1]

We all know what journalism is at its worst. This is journalism at its best. The authors are respectively the military correspondent of *Ha'aretz*, Israel's leading newspaper, and the Middle East affairs correspondent of Israel Television. Their book shows what "investigative journalism" can do when it focuses on a serious issue—in this case: why did Israel invade Lebanon?

The answer, to put it bluntly, was that former General Ariel Sharon, then Defence Minister in the government of Menachem Begin, believed it would achieve very valuable gains for Israel. Everyone recognised the military ability of Sharon; he was quintessentially the kind of inspired soldier who could disobey orders—as in his operations after the crossing of the Suez Canal in 1973—and by the sheer daring of his conception and rapid exploitation of his aim justify his original disobedience. Naturally his men adored him. Schiff and Ya'ari describe him in less generous terms. In Cabinet meetings he was "a cynical, head-strong executor who regarded the IDF [Israel Defence Forces] as his personal tool for obtaining sweeping achievements—not necessarily defensive ones—and a minister prepared to stake the national interest on his struggle for power."

It has been said that war is too important to be left to the generals, and looking around the world it might be said that diplomacy is too important to be entrusted to diplomats. What is absolutely certain in this instance is that foreign policy is not amenable to military principles. Sharon thought that the kind of bravura tactics which he had demonstrated so spectacularly in the field could be applied to political objectives in Lebanon. A swift advance into Lebanon, disobeying

[1] *Israel's Lebanon War*. By ZE'EV SCHIFF and EHUD YA'ARI. George Allen & Unwin, £12.95.

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orders, to seize the enemy camp (Beirut) would achieve not merely the immediate objective of securing Israel's border settlements; it would smash the PLO, cutting Syria down to size *en passant*, and offer the strategic gain of a peace treaty with Lebanon; thus clearing the way to negotiations, without the encumbrance of Yasser Arafat, with the country Israel really wanted to do a deal with—Jordan.

Yes, well, none of this was going to work, as many commentators pointed out at the time. Sharon's critics, in other words, were not simply wise after the event. But Sharon was not a man to take account of the subtleties of diplomacy or the realities of Lebanese life or the emotional convictions of the Palestinians. Or, for that matter, the concerns of his own countrymen. What he wanted was to go over the top, in pursuit of his grand design, and that is what he did. The result, looking at it merely in his own terms, let alone what happened to Lebanon, was surely one of the worst disasters that have ever befallen the Jewish people. As the authors conclude:

> "Born of the ambition of one wilful, reckless man, Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon was anchored in delusion, propelled by deceit, and bound to end in calamity. It is a war for whose meagre gains Israel has paid an enormous price that has yet to be altogether reckoned. . . . There is no consolation for this costly, senseless war. The best one can now do is learn its lessons well."

The account given in *Israel's Lebanon War* details the behind-the-scenes political manoeuvring which enabled Sharon to pursue his aim in the way he did. The story is not all negative: Israel's democracy survived, and the act of cleansing and self-examination which Israeli society was forced to experience, and which it is still going through, may perhaps leave the country stronger. Given the immense tasks it faces, Israel needs to recover all of that moral strength on which the State was founded.

Among other books spawned by the war, *Operation Peace for Galilee* by Richard Gabriel,[2] a former Pentagon intelligence officer, gives a competent account of Israel's military tactics in the campaign. The military goals of the war, this study concludes, were achieved. There is much expert analysis of tactics, since Israel was fighting in a new situation, namely in built-up areas and in mountain terrain. The question left open, having drawn the military lessons, is the future relation of the IDF to the political structure and to the society it serves: "shall the IDF be used in its traditional ethical and historical context as a defensive force, or had Israel become like other nations whose armed forces are used to achieve political goals that have little to do with defence of the homeland?" A book for the future here.

The War for Lebanon, 1970-1985, by Itamar Rabinovich,[3] provides the historical context in which the fighting took place—that is, both the civil war and the Israeli invasion. This is a lucid and learned modern history, updating the author's previous study which took the story up to 1983. As Professor Rabinovich sets the scene, the collapse of Lebanon presents a paradox. From one vantage-point Lebanon can be seen as artificial and archaic and doomed to collapse, hence the first 30 years of its existence can be seen as the working-out of prophecy. From the opposite vantage-point, the Lebanese system can be seen as an impressive and unique attempt in the Middle East to develop a pluralistic policy, and the wonder is that it survived for 30 years.

As the Israelis complete their withdrawal, the fragments of the Lebanese kaleidoscope reform, and the fighting goes on between the old factions in new guise.

> "The conflict over the future of southern Lebanon continues, and so does the contest for the control of Beirut and the national political stage. . . . Of the Lebanese communities, the Maronites and the Sunnis, many among whom enjoyed an illusory sense of power in the final months of 1982, have suffered a distinct loss of power and position. What was lost by Israel and these two communities has apparently been gained by Syria, the Shi'is, and the Druzes. But no one is more acutely aware of the ephemeral nature of power and success in the contest of the Lebanese crisis than the apparent winners themselves."

THE WAR WAS ONE THING, the reporting of it another. I cannot recall any international event in modern times which has aroused so much ire, on both sides, in the objections to and criticisms of the Western media. (One has to say "Western", because whatever their many defects, the press and television in the Western countries, being independent of their governments, are the only media which could exercise choice about their style of reporting, and do it one way or another.) The American TV companies get the brunt of the blame, interestingly enough, from both Israeli sympathisers and the champions of Islam.

Thus John Laffin, author of some 50 books on current affairs, claims in *The War of Desperation*[4] (not exactly a neutral title) that the Israelis got a raw deal. He cites numbers of errors in American reporting and, in particular, charges the TV networks with fabricating or transposing picture material to back up their preconceived stories of Israeli misdeeds. There were many mistakes in reporting, of course. War reporting is a very difficult and risky task, which anyone who has not experienced it can barely imagine. Some of the errors were indeed gross, others attributable to the kind of selective or emotional judgments inevitable in such situations.

But was the overall coverage of the war unfair from Israel's point of view? Let me say flatly that I believe that the main course of events was reported perfectly accurately, though I cannot delve into chapter and verse to prove that judgment. I think there is another sort of explanation for the anguish so often expressed by, for example, Jewish community leaders

---

[2] *Operation Peace for Galilee*. By RICHARD A. GABRIEL. Faber and Faber, £9.95.

[3] *The War for Lebanon, 1970-1985*. By ITAMAR RABINOVICH. Cornell University Press, $29.95, paper $9.95.

[4] *The War of Desperation*. By JOHN LAFFIN. Osprey Publishing, £9.95.

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in Britain over the reporting of the war. Their protests were a kind of psychological defence mechanism. They simply could not bring themselves to believe that Israel was conducting such a war, in such a way, at such a human cost (leaving aside the admitted exaggeration of the civilian casualties), in direct contravention of everything they knew and believed Israel had stood for in the first 35 years of its life. They knew it could not be true. It must, therefore, be the fault of the media. (The age-old reaction of taking it out on the hapless bearer of bad tidings.)

Criticism from this quarter is concerned with misreporting and bias in Israel's conduct of the war, rather than any broad charge of anti-Semitism as such. By contrast, criticism from the other side takes much of its force from what is seen as Western misrepresentation of Islam itself. The principal accuser is Edward Said, whose polemic *Covering Islam*[5] is a long indictment of the media and the experts. The title is a pun, in the sense of reporting as "covering up" Islam.

One of Professor Said's main points is that the term "Islam" as it is used today seems to mean one simple thing but in fact is part fiction, part ideological label, part minimal designation of a religion called Islam. "In no really significant way is there a direct correspondence between the 'Islam' of common Western usage and the enormously varied life that goes on within the world of Islam, with its more than 800,000,000 people, its millions of square miles in Africa and Asia, its dozens of societies, states, histories, geographies, cultures."

At the same time "Islam", after events like the emergence of the oil cartel OPEC, the Iranian revolution, the occupation of Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq war, and the resurgence of radical nationalism in the Islamic world, is peculiarly traumatic news in the West. The coverage in the media, he claims, is misleadingly full.

> "It has given consumers of news the sense that they have understood Islam without at the same time intimating to them that a great deal in this energetic coverage is based on far from objective material . . . patent inaccuracy . . . expressions of unrestrained ethocentrism, cultural and even racial hatred. . . . There is an unquestioned assumption that Islam can be characterised limitlessly by a handful of recklessly general and repeatedly employed clichés."

As a diplomatic reporter on the daily news round, one can only plead guilty straight away. How many times has one used, as a kind of desperate shorthand, expressions like "Islamic fundamentalism", "Islamic revolutionary guards", "Shi'a extremists", and so on? In the very moment of employing such opaque terms, reporters are only too aware of the compression of meaning involved. There is no time to explore the varieties of sense and sensibility these terms connote. Even if there was the space and the time, the media would be hard pressed to explain the differences between Shi'a and Sunni attitudes to Islam; as hard pressed, perhaps, as people who write for the Arab press might themselves be to draw a meaningful distinction between Catholic and Protestant beliefs in Northern Ireland.

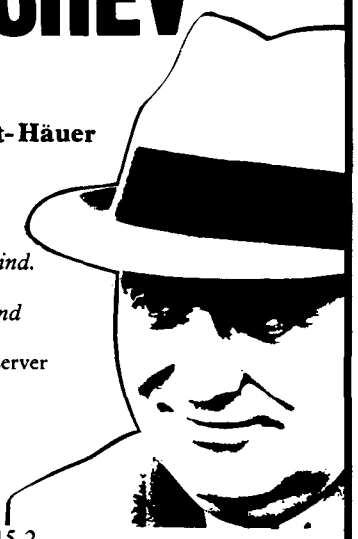
While granting the force of Professor Said's case, he seems to me to overstate it, or to understate the conditions in which the media operate. Much of his analysis is illuminating, as on Washington's misreading of the American hostage crisis in Iran or the "Death of a Princess" episode in Saudi Arabia—though I missed in his account of these stories any concern for the fate of the hapless Princess herself as a woman, or very much empathy for the ordeal of the hostages. But no one would disagree with his conclusion that:

> "Respect for the concrete detail of human experience, understanding that arises from viewing the Other compassionately, knowledge gained and diffused through moral and intellectual honesty: surely these are better, if not easier, goals at present than confrontation and reductive hostility."

A good example of such an approach is a political biography, by a Jewish scholar, of the one Arab leader who has managed to rise above the mundane conflict: Anwar Sadat. In *Man of Defiance*,[6] Professor Raphael Israeli of the Hebrew University traces the evolution of Sadat's life and character, relating his political thinking and leadership to the traditional Egyptian values he imbibed from village life in his boyhood: an illuminating account. Sadat paid with his life for carrying

GORBACHEV

THE PATH TO POWER
by Christian Schmidt-Häuer



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[5] *Covering Islam*. By EDWARD W. SAID. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4.95.

[6] *Man of Defiance*. By RAPHAEL ISRAELI. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £18.95.

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through his vision; the resultant peace treaty between Egypt and Israel is his memorial. Yet, in the complicated way things work out in the Middle East, that very achievement fuelled the hatreds that led to the upheaval in Lebanon.

There are many books on Islam, of course. One, entirely non-political, which happens to be to hand is Gai Eaton's *Islam and the Destiny of Man*.[7] This is a personal account of the Muslim religion by a convert, a former member of the British diplomatic service. As such it conveys a deeply-felt experience, by a Westerner, of what it means to accept the faith, and how the faith manifests itself in the modern world: "Every aspect of human life, every thought and every action, is shaped and evaluated in the light of the basic article of faith."

Finally, an extended account of reporting of the Lebanon war is given in *The Media: Freedom or Responsibility*, edited by Julian Landau.[8] The purpose of the book is to illuminate what is termed "the potential conflict" (but is clearly seen as the actual conflict) between freedom and responsibility in the way the war was reported. The tone is set by the masterly opening piece by Professor Walter Laqueur, reprinted from the *Washington Journalism Review*, and entitled "Foreign News Coverage: From Bad to Worse." The main thrust of this, as of the selections given in the volume overall, is on the poor quality of coverage of foreign news in the American media. One is not inclined to take issue with a prosecutor of Professor Laqueur's standing (it is for the American media to defend their cause); and he sees little chance of improvement in television and radio, though some hope in newspaper coverage.

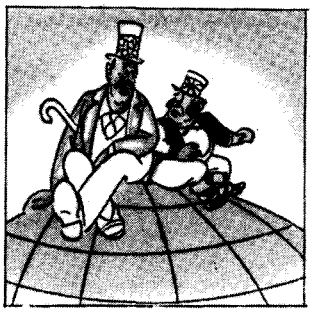
Well, there is a lot wrong with our own media. Anyone who has ever worked on a newspaper knows that almost any subject you like to name, from sports reporting to literary criticism, provokes very hostile, contradictory reactions. That is the nature of subjective reporting of events, and that is the nature of readers, too. However gross the Western press's faults of omission and commission, it would be possible, I feel sure, to compile a companion volume showing equally impressive *virtues* in the reporting of the Lebanese war. The shrillness of some of the critics betrays them. It is a basic strength of Western society, as opposed to almost any other society you care to mention, that this kind of argument should be carried on, in the open.

[7] *Islam and the Destiny of Man*. By Gai Eaton. George Allen & Unwin, £12.95.

[8] *The Media: Freedom or Responsibility: The War in Lebanon, 1982*. Edited by Julian J. Landau. B.A.L. Mass Communications Ltd.

John Bull & After

Anglo-American Relations—By Max Beloff



To continental Europeans—especially the French—the British and Americans may appear as almost interchangeable elements in the world-political scene, and the transfer of power from London to New York/Washington a mere incident in a longer attempt at an "Anglo-Saxon hegemony."

Neither the British nor the Americans in the main find this description realistic. There are aspects of the relations between the two countries which are of a somewhat particular kind and which have led to the development of the misleading idea of "the special relationship", but ever since the United States entered world politics in a major way at the turn of the century, the relations between the USA and Britain have been as complex and as variable as between any other two major powers: now friendly, now hostile, now in alliance, now deeply at odds. What has happened, taking a long view, is that Britain's decline in economic, military, and political terms and, to some extent, in cultural leadership has been accompanied by, and at times accelerated by, the parallel growth of the authority and influence of the United States. And this makes it understandable that Professor D. Cameron Watt should have entitled his latest work on this absorbing subject *Succeeding John Bull*.[1] Yet it is a succession with a difference and the book's subtitle, *America in Britain's Place, 1900-1975*, is less apt, since the *pax Americana* in so far as it exists is predicated on a different set of assumptions and forwarded by rather different means to the *pax Britannica* which it has replaced.

Professor Watt's book is perhaps a less definitive treatment than one might have hoped for from someone for whom the subject has been at the centre of his scholarly concerns. It consists in part of the Wiles Lectures delivered by him at Belfast in 1981 and of three additional "case studies" dealing with the contrast between American Presidential government and European-style Cabinet government as reflected in the conduct of international affairs, with the relations between Britain and the USA in respect of the changing situation in French Indo-China during the Second World War, and with the role of American anti-colonialist policies in the winding-up of the European colonial empires between 1941 and 1962. In part, as Professor Watt points out, the book is based upon his own archival researches, in part upon the work done by other scholars which he has attempted to synthesise. If for nothing else, the reader should be grateful to Professor Watt

[1] *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain's Place, 1900-1975*. By D. Cameron Watt. Cambridge University Press, £22.50, $34.50.

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for his wide sweep of bibliographical reference which will much facilitate the task of others in the field. This scholarly concern with sources is not altogether matched by the normally parallel concern for accuracy; some errors cannot be wholly attributed to the inadequacies of proof-reading from which even University presses are no longer immune.[2] Nor does Professor Watt altogether avoid the pitfalls of subjectivity and pattern-making which are often the product of something conceived of as a set of lectures rather than a finished treatise.

Professor Watt makes it plain that his intention has not in fact been to write a history of Anglo-American relations over the period—a task which no one has yet successfully attempted—but to treat the question largely in terms of the changing perceptions of the issues by the respective policy-making élites of the two countries. To do this inevitably involves some lack of symmetry. British policy-making élites have been both restricted in size and continuous in membership. One can see them consciously grappling with the problems presented by the rise of American power and exploring the ways in which it might be turned to Britain's advantage, or at least prevented from contributing to Britain's difficulties; though one could question the attempt to allocate individual British statesmen or officials in the inter-War period to particular schools of thought on these matters.

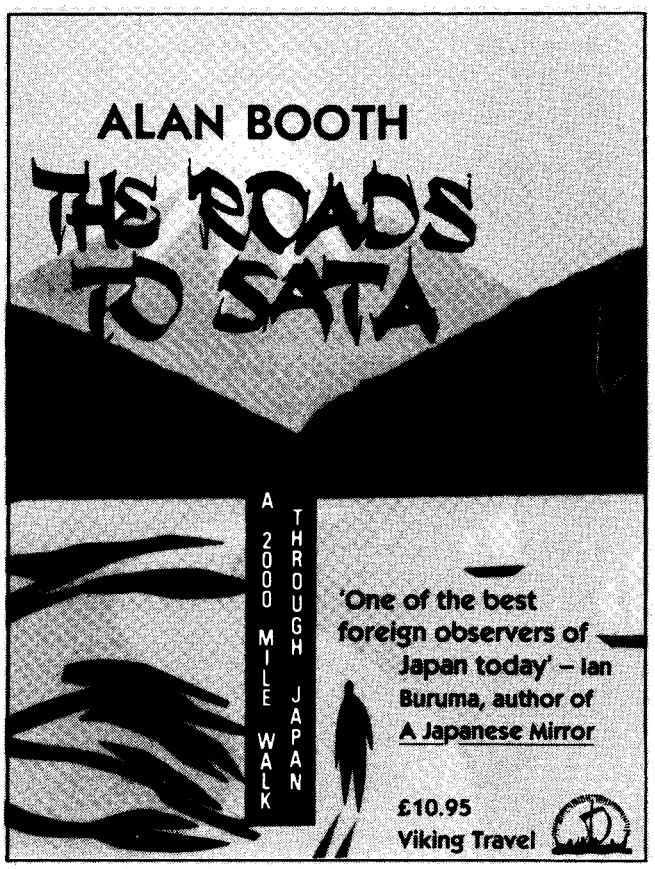
More important is the fact that these élites have no proper American parallel. The most enduring of the American versions, the so-called "East Coast Establishment", was linked by personal ties to some of its British counterparts, partly deriving from common experience during the Paris Peace Conference. And as a former member of the staff of Chatham House, Professor Watt gives due place to its links with the American Council on Foreign Relations. But from Roosevelt onwards the American scene threw up new men and new influences, marked by a growing strain of populism and nationalism whose impact was at once more diffuse and more powerful. It is no good playing the Greeks to the Romans, if the Romans don't want to learn Greek.

This is not the only problem created by the asymmetry of the two terms in the equation. For Britain, at first intermittently and then continuously, relations with the USA were central to all aspects of her policy, and the Washington Embassy was the most coveted and important post in her diplomatic armoury. But Americans not of the isolationist persuasion looked at the world, and particularly at Europe, in a more general fashion—relations with Britain were subordinated to wider considerations. For instance, a recent study of Walter Lippmann as a political thinker makes much of his "cosmopolitanism" and of his conviction that the United States could not stand outside the currents of world affairs; but the author at no point suggests that Lippmann thought that Britain should have a special role in America's international outlook.[3]

The advent of the Cold War and the fixation of the United States upon rivalry with the Soviet Union, and opposition to Communism as the central issue in policy from which everything else is a distraction, further distanced the two countries despite Britain's earlier and clearer perception of the Soviet threat. Professor Watt regards Suez as the "turning-point" in the story, but it is worth pointing out that the authors of Britain's discomfiture were John Foster Dulles—a key figure in the East Coast establishment—and President Eisenhower, whose British links in wartime and at NATO were perhaps closer than those of any other leading American at the time.

Professor Watt sees Britain's "entry into Europe", a course long advocated by the Americans, as being the end of the "special relationship." Where he breaks new ground, though without pursuing his insights, is in his emphasis on the unwillingness of the United States to feel or display any solidarity outside Europe with the old imperial powers:

> "Behind all this lay not an economic imperialism *per se*, as is sometimes argued by revisionists with Marxist views, but a moral imperialism and an arrogance of power which has done much in its turn to induce the growth in Western Europe of a consciousness of separateness from and lack of identity between its own political systems and that of the United States. . . ."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[2] "Brookings Institute" for "Brookings Institution"; Carden for Cardwell; Henry Steele-Maitland for Arthur Steel-Maitland; Vandenburg for Vandenberg. And while it is true that Edward Carson, the leader of the Ulster rebels of 1914, ended up in the Cabinet, who is the mysterious "Campbell" to whom Professor Watt credits a similar political ascent? He certainly has no warrant for this in the letter from Theodore Roosevelt which he gives as his source.

[3] *Walter Lippmann: Cosmopolitanism in the Century of Total War.* By D. STEVEN BLUM. Cornell University Press, $21.95.

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Books Encountered

"Orator" Hunt: Henry Hunt and English Working-Class Radicalism. By JOHN BELCHEM. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £25.

The first proper biography of the vain but effective radical, sometime comrade and gaol-mate of William Cobbett, who shone at Peterloo but was later eclipsed by the liberal gradualism he rejected.

An Introduction to Victorian Painting. By KENNETH BENDINER. Yale University Press $35.00, £30.

The author, an associate professor of art history, seems more an historian than a critic. He treats seven paintings—by Landseer, Ward, Brett, Holman Hunt, Whistler, Forbes, and Lord Leighton—as windows on Victorian concerns. But wasn't Whistler the best of a poor bunch?

Testament of a Generation: The Journalism of Vera Brittain and Winifred Holtby. Edited by PAUL BERRY and ALAN BISHOP. Virago Press, £12.95, paper £5.95.

Well introduced and annotated, but rather assiduous compilation of short pieces by two talented friends and feminists (not lovers). They held sensible opinions and expressed them anywhere, from *Christian Century (US)* to the *Radio Times*. But do well-directed squibs make a Testament?

Chronicle of Friendship: Vera Brittain's Diary of the Thirties 1932-1939. Edited by ALAN BISHOP. Gollancz, £12.95.

Much more substantial and interesting testimony to the fizz and bustle of an active, articulate literary and political life. Fuller than the first diary selection, *Chronicle of Youth,* it lacks that volume's wartime poignancy, except in the illness and death of Winifred Holtby.

Clement Attlee: A Political Biography. By TREVOR BURRIDGE. Jonathan Cape, £20.

Worthy and comprehensive, Dr Burridge's study adds orchestral depth to Kenneth Harris's (and Roy Jenkins's) more sparkling performances, but the tunes we come out whistling are much the same: *There'll Always Be An England* and *Keep Right on to the End of the Road.*

Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France. By PAUL FRÉART DE CHANTELOU. Translated by MARGERY CORBETT, edited by ANTHONY BLUNT, and annotated by GEORGE C. BAUER. Princeton University Press, £35.

Day-to-day, Boswell-like account, by Louis XIV's steward, of Bernini's visit to Paris in 1665 to make abortive plans for completing the Louvre. Told off to be his dragoman, Chantelou earned affection; and, although complimented on his discretion, told revealing tales.

Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals. By MARILYN FRENCH. Jonathan Cape, £15.

Enormous tome, as eclectic as Isaac D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature,* documenting the thesis that patriarchy and power-worship thwart both men and women and lead to violence, poverty, and pollution. So? Feminism offers love, compassion, sharing, and procreation. This way, men.

The Spanish Ulcer: A History of the Peninsular War. By DAVID GATES. Allen & Unwin, £15.

Meticulous military history, on oddly shiny paper, of Napoleon's armies' first major defeat—by Wellington and Sir John Moore, but also by Spanish *guerrilleros*. Digesting the classic (and patriotic) accounts, adding new insights, and maintaining objectivity, Dr Gates has a tight schedule, but crams everything in.

Freud for Historians. By PETER GAY. Oxford University Press, £16.50.

Breezy, perhaps over-confident argument that psychoanalysis can illuminate history, by the Sterling Professor at Yale. Given the hazards of verifying Freudian hypotheses in living patients, explorers of archives and even novels may be doubly wary.

For Better, For Worse: British Marriages, 1600 to the Present. By JOHN R. GILLIS. Oxford University Press, £19.50.

Sane and scholarly investigation by the Chairman of the History Department at Rutgers, taking up the story roughly where E. S. Turner's witty *History of Courting* left off—at the altar, or its common-law equivalent. Marriage, it concludes, is too productive to be purely private.

Georg Lukács and his Generation 1900-1918. By MARY GLUCK. Harvard University Press, $25.00, £21.25.

Learned, humane, and unusual account of Lukács in modernist pre-Marxist days, in a Budapest whose young sparks included Béla Balázs and Karl Mannheim. I kept thinking of Stephen Daedalus.

The Rome of Alexander VII 1655-1667. By RICHARD KRAUTHEIMER. Princeton University Press. £18.

For its size and sumptuousness, a modestly priced blend of history and guide to the heyday of Roman Baroque, by the Professor Emeritus of the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University. Bernini again, of course, and the finest vistas in Rome: but a costly *conto* for the Church.

The Games Ethic and Imperialism. By J. A. MANGAN. Viking, £14.95.

Slightly reproachful, sometimes grudgingly admiring account of how public-school games, sense of duty, and team-spirit fuelled the morale and practice of Empire-builders, actually getting colonial peoples to like cricket. Quotes Newbolt and Dean Farrar, but not the latter's remark, in *Julian Home,* that the Indian Civil Service "has been of such enormous advantage to the 'middle classes' of England."

Women Writing About Men. By JANE MILLER. Virago Press, £10.95. paper £5.50.

Probing, self-challenging exploration of how women writers try, and often fail, to subvert the images of men to which men have conditioned them, from Jane Austen down to Angela Carter *et al.* A touch patriotic against the slender gender, but fascinating and profound.

The Literary Achievement of Rebecca West. By HAROLD OREL. Macmillan, £25.

Forbidding title for a painstaking, just assessment of Rebecca West's manifold genres. Professor Orel sees *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* as her best book; is fair to her uneven novels; and seems rather pedestrian on *The Meaning of Treason* and *A Train of Powder.*

Art and Psyche. By ELLEN HANDLER SPITZ. Yale University Press, $18.95, £18.95.

Densely written but modestly phrased suggestions about how psychoanalytic approaches might illuminate works of art *per se*, their relationship to the artist, and ditto to the public. See Professor Gay above.

Reflections in a Writer's Eye: Writings on Travel. By ANGUS WILSON. Secker & Warburg, £9.95.

A string of thirteen gems, one from these pages, sparkling with observation, facts, and wit. Even "The Channel Islands", panned by one reviewer, comes alive to those who know them; and even the United States, worn flat by British brogues, pops up again when Sir Angus asks in a bar if they have a Pernod. "The waitress said, 'A piano? No. Do you want a drink?' "

R.M.

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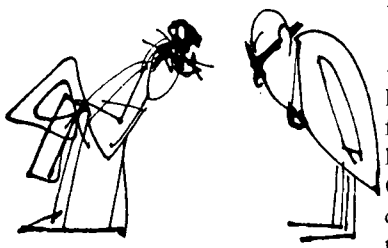
EAST & WEST

Letter from Tokyo

Ichiban or Number One

By Anthony Thwaite



ELEMENTS of chance have played a bigger part in my life than I can account for. Why do I possess a handkerchief with the Chancellor of the Exchequer's "Cash's name-tape" stitched on to it? I suppose because 30-odd years ago Nigel Lawson's handkerchiefs and mine used to go to the same Oxford laundry via Christ Church. Perhaps he has one of mine. A little later, I set off for Japan. It could as easily have been Indonesia, or Manchester; and it almost was. When I saw an advertisement for a visiting lectureship at Tokyo University and applied for the post, my ignorance of Japan was profound: I think I simply thought it was a place English poets went to teach in (Edmund Blunden, William Empson, George Barker, G. S. Fraser). Thus a long relationship with Japan began, which 30 years later finds me back here again, as fascinated as I was when I first set foot in Yokohama on a dark, wet day in autumn, very like the day on which I am typing this in a north-western suburb of Tokyo. I know a great deal more about Japan than I did then. But I still find it a puzzle.

The history of the West's reaction to the enigma of Japan would make a lengthy study in itself. In the late 16th century Alessandro Valignano, in many ways the most intelligent and sympathetic of the Jesuits who attempted the conversion of Japan, came to the conclusion that:

> "So great is the difference in their food, clothing, honours, ceremonies, language, management of the household, in their way of negotiating, sitting, building, curing the wounded and sick, teaching and bringing up children, and in everything else, that it can be neither described nor understood."

Three centuries later Lafcadio Hearn, in his last and most complex book, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*, prefaced his study, after over a decade of living and working in the country, with the comment:

> "Long ago the best and dearest Japanese friend I ever had said to me, a little before his death: 'When you find, in four or five years more, that you cannot understand the Japanese at all, then you will begin to know something about them.' After having realized the truth of my friend's prediction, after having discovered that I cannot understand the Japanese at all, I feel better qualified to attempt this essay."

In 1985 a British writer, Alan Booth, long resident in Japan and fluent in Japanese in a way that Valignano and Hearn never were, published a marvellously acute and funny account of a 2,000-mile walk he made from the northern tip of Hokkaido to the southern tip of Kyushu, *The Roads to Sata*.[1] At the end of the book he reflects on a conversation he had part-way through his journey, with an old man sitting outside a little grocer's shop. Booth told him he lived in Tokyo:

> "'Tokyo is not Japan', he said. 'You can't understand Japan by living in Tokyo.'
>
> 'No', I agreed. 'That's why I'm taking this time off to have a good look at the rest of it.'
>
> 'You can't understand Japan just by looking at it', the old man said.
>
> 'No, not just by looking at it', I said. 'Not by looking at it as a tourist might out of the window of a bus, but by walking through the whole length of it.'
>
> 'You can't understand Japan just by walking through it', the old man said.
>
> 'Not just by walking through it', I argued, 'but by talking to all the different people I meet.'
>
> 'You can't understand Japan just by talking to people', the old man said.
>
> 'How do you suggest I try to understand Japan, then?' I asked him.
>
> He seemed surprised by the question, and a little hurt, and a little angry.
>
> 'You can't understand Japan', he said."

End of conversation, end of book. But the irony is that, in their different ways and at their different times, Valignano, Hearn and Booth show a considerable understanding of Japan and the Japanese. Both knowledgeable and modest, they help to perpetuate the old stereotypes nevertheless: in the process of explaining, it is their emphasis on the enigmatic that is remembered, not their explanations.

THE JAPANESE THEMSELVES have actively helped in this process. They like—or many of them like, since I must myself avoid blanket generalisations—to see themselves as enigmatic, a peculiar people, inscrutable if you will. And now the matter has some urgency. The past few years have seen the publication of a whole shelf-ful of books, mainly American in origin, which in their various ways try to "explain" Japan, most particularly as guides to effective business dealings. The 20-year emergence of Japan as the leading world economic rival to both the United States and the whole of Western

[1] *The Roads to Sata*. By ALAN BOOTH. (Kodanshi, Tokyo, 1985.) Viking, $16.95, £10.95 (10 April publication).

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Europe has, on the one hand, reinforced the old stereotypes (sometimes in what may superficially look like new forms, but often—as has always been usual—with an undercurrent of hysteria) and, on the other hand, propelled ideas about Japan from their traditionally marginal, literally exotic position to one which has to be seen as central—and in practical terms. In his *Dealing with the Japanese*[2] Mark Zimmerman (an Anglo-American international businessman who died of leukemia in 1983) unemotionally comes to the conclusion that the United States must "cede leadership in Asia to Japan":

> "We have already virtually given up economic leadership, and Japan has been undertaking ever-greater responsibility for development assistance in the region. Ultimately, Japan will inevitably begin taking on responsibility for the defence of the area as well, though this may take a long time because of the past atrocities that are still fresh in many living memories in Asia. But the shadow of the past will lift eventually; the Japanese have effectively gained by peaceful means what they had sought to win by going to war, so the old enmities will eventually become academic."

Much of Zimmerman's book is taken up with patient, sensible, sympathetic accounts of Japanese decision-making, of how custom and etiquette operate in ordinary life and in business, and the result is to give one a sort of psychological "reading" of the Japanese. He is determined to present a subtler and more truthful picture of them than the "inscrutable economic animals in rabbit hutches" characterised by some EEC official a few years ago.

WHAT IT DOESN'T GIVE is any idea of the departures from what may very well be the norm.

"The Japanese" Zimmerman was writing about are Japanese businessmen; and I wouldn't like to attempt a psychological "reading" of the British or the Americans purely, or even mainly, on observation of businessmen. Recently I stayed with a Japanese friend in an *onsen*, or hot-spring hotel, in a remote and mountainous part of north-central Honshu: a primitive, decrepit but sublimely away-from-it-all establishment, in which temporary visitors like ourselves mixed in with longer-term guests who were there more seriously to "take the waters." The youngish man who brought us our meals in our room and who did all kinds of cleaning and other odd jobs on the premises was a good example of a fairly recent phenomenon, the *datsu-sara* or "disconnect-oneself-from-salary" man. In the winter months he works in a Nissan assembly plant in the Yokohama area; in the summer, he travels hundreds of miles north to the *onsen* in Kuroi and works there. This is his yearly frame and the way (he said) he keeps his sanity. He isn't a "drop-out" in a recognisable Western sense; but at the same time he's determined not to become that Japanese caricature, the *sararyman*, whose soul is conventionally supposed to belong to his company. Very little of what Mark Zimmerman says in his book applies to Fujiwara-san (a splendid surname in itself, by the way, rather like being called "Plantagenet").

The devoted company-man still, of course, exists: you can see him every time you travel on the Tokyo subway, in his dark blue suit with the company badge, a loyal man in uniform. (Though in fact recent figures show that there is a higher proportion of self-employed in Japan than in Britain.) But what strikes me about Japan today is how many "uniforms" there are, and how much they allow for every kind of heterodoxy, in a way that was certainly not true 30 years ago. It's not just true of students and the young, though these have joined their contemporaries in America and Europe in the prolific variety of their dress—everything from I-want-you-to-hate-me characters with violently dyed porcupine hair-dos, quantities of spiked metal and rude slogans (in English), to boys and girls with the sensitively ascetic features of tortured saints dressed in beautifully-tailored baggy ragamuffin outfits, an amalgam of Dostoevsky, Paris, and money. Academics cover a wide spectrum, from the casual 1950s Lucky-Jim leather-patched old tweed jacket and flannels to the telly-don with slightly luxurious hair and expensive thonged neckerchief. With the variety of costume goes a variety of behaviour, in or out of uniform. I notice that high-school students—male and female—frequently behave in public with an expansiveness and lack of inhibition that seems new in Japan, chaffing, loudly gossiping and fooling about in a way that may seem calculated to shock (or at least offend) their elders but evidently doesn't. Not that they seem directly impolite. Politeness is still the rule rather than the exception in Japan, and young people will give up their seats in trains and buses for frail old ladies (as well as for obstreperous infants). But they no longer behave with what I remember as constipated stiffness, bowing to their teachers or severely and myopically fixing their eyes on their nasty little textbooks.

IN FACT ONE OF THE MOST OBVIOUS changes has been in what one might call public reading (and maybe private too). The *manga*, usually translated as "comic", has hugely expanded: everything from the modern Japanese equivalent of the old *Tiger Tim* or *Beano*, through soppy romances for teenage girls and soppier ones for older women, to lurid horror adventures, resurrections of war stories, Samurai tales from the medieval past, golf-playing sagas, baseball-playing sagas, and intricately delineated versions of bondage and sado-masochism. I notice nowadays how many different people of different ages are reading one or other of these, often outnumbering the public readers of newspapers, magazines, or small unillustrated paperbacks. (These latter, of course, include everything from serious political commentary to *How to Increase Your Sex Potential*, from contemporary novelists such as Abe and Oe to translations of Solzhenitsyn and Iris Murdoch.)

Serious friends of mine lament this decline in the serious reading habit, and point, for example, to the slump in sales of the formerly important quarterlies and monthlies, the Japanese equivalents of ENCOUNTER. They lament, too, the

[2] *Dealing with the Japanese*. By MARK ZIMMERMAN. Allen & Unwin, £12.50.

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increasing triviality and advertising-domination of much television: NHK, state-funded, keeps up standards and has an educational channel (I recently watched a marvellously sub-titled BBC *Richard III*), but the numerous commercial channels are awash with the usual quiz-games; "personality" (the word has become Japanised) shows; oafish comedies; and advertisements which sometimes seem to break in every five minutes.

Of course, serious "creativity" hasn't totally vanished down the plughole of trivialisation. Anyone who has seen Kurosawa's *Ran* (his majestic and overwhelming variant of *King Lear*) will recognise that; or anyone who saw the Toho *Macbeth* at the 1985 Edinburgh Festival (being here, I missed it on stage, but even the video version gives a convincing impression of its authority). The little theatres, though little, are flourishing, with both imported and home-grown new drama. I haven't seen enough of the home-grown to judge its quality: a recent offering I saw in a beautifully designed suburban theatre (owned, incidentally, by the local government) seemed to be an uneasily eclectic piece which, though festooned with bits of German Expressionism, Capek's *RUR*, sidelong glances at Cocteau, etc., and though its title played on a Japanese pun to do with "metaphysical" and "anarchy", ended up (as my Japanese companion confirmed) as a stolidly moralising cautionary tale about illusion and reality. But it was very well acted and presented.

ILLUSION AND REALITY have been players in the long-running drama of what people think Mr Nakasone, the Prime Minister, is up to, or what he thinks he's up to.

As the post-War Prime Minister with the highest profile (with the possible exceptions of Yoshida, often compared with his contemporary Adenauer, and of the now disgraced, ill, but still powerful *éminence grise* Tanaka), Mr Nakasone showed self-confidence if nothing else by making an "official" visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, a monument to the military dead which hitherto has been treated with circumspect caution by post-War politicians, other than those on the extreme nationalist Right. The Chinese and Koreans were furious, the Socialist Party and other Left and Left-of-centre parties have been vocal, the newspapers have been debating the visit endlessly. Whatever the motive or wisdom of what Mr Nakasone was up to, it seems ludicrous to see it as part of a "new bellicosity" in Japan. Whether Defence spending is marginally increased or not—and it does seem likely to be increased—there can be no doubt at all that Japan is one of the least war-minded countries on earth. What happened at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, whatever view one takes of its "necessity" or otherwise (continually debated in the press here as elsewhere), made a mark on Japanese consciousness which is indelible. The debate about Defence spending really has nothing to do with any resurgence of militarism, or even nationalism, but a great deal to do with Japan's continued dependence on the United States as the architect of its post-War foreign policy, resentments about this, and a common wish not to be involved in any outside entanglements.

Of course Japan can't avoid such entanglements. Its economic importance alone precludes isolationism. But I notice signs of a wistful nostalgia for earlier, simpler times among people of all ages and many different persuasions.

Recently NHK showed a four-part programme which was a dramatised version of Lafcadio Hearn's life in Japan. The programme was widely popular, and several people told me that what appealed to them was the carefully reconstructed atmosphere of Meiji Japan, of the years (1890-1904) when Hearn lived here—a period that very few can directly remember, of course, but its relative simplicity is something that people at least imagine lasted for a longish time after that. A friend who is in her early fifties recently visited China for the first time with a group of her old contemporaries from college days; and she told me that it was the *backwardness* of China to which so many of them responded, casting them back happily to their own childhoods in Japan, with no traffic jams, no television, no conspicuous consumption, none of the razzle-dazzle of Tokyo today. They were not "soft" about Chinese communism; they just saw what Japan, in its own "great leap forward", has lost in the process.

TOKYO TODAY is an immensely energetic, overcrowded, ugly, affluent and efficient city. The smog which blanketed it in the 1960s has been banished, defeated by very strict regulations affecting petrol and factories. Public transport, though packed tight for much of the day and night, is a great deal cleaner than London's (as are the streets of Tokyo)—and, without any Mussolini, everything runs conspicuously on time. There is a self-imposed, self-regulating orderliness about the Japanese: if that broke down, the place would plunge into chaos. From time to time there is talk about what would happen if there were a major earthquake—something predicted for many years. But in fact there *was* a major one in October, almost as strong as that which destroyed most of Tokyo and Yokohama in 1923, and the effect was minimal. The flimsiness, frailty and provisional ramshackledom of Japan can be, and has been, too much emphasised and insisted on. It is tough and resilient too, with a strong sense of continuity. As it slowly but inevitably moves towards the centre of the stage—more hesitantly politically than it has done with such speed and vigour economically—it will have to be looked at less patronisingly, less peripherally, than hitherto.

The old "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere", as Mark Zimmerman suggests, has now largely come about, not through war but peacefully. *Ichiban* (Number One) seems to be where Japan is going.

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INTERVIEW

Eco I, Eco II, Eco III. . . .

By Dieter E. Zimmer

THE OLD CASTLE seems to be peopled with ghosts. Usually Schloss Eberbach on the Rhine is the wine pilgrim's station of the way, a merry place for vintage-tasters. Now monks in Benedictine robes take slow, measured steps towards the refectory, eyes humbly lowered in obedience to the order's old injunction against staring. At the long tables the places are set with rough-hewn wooden plates and spoons, and the smoky wicks of the clay oil-lamps smoulder towards the arched vaults. The Middle Ages have come again, everything to perfection; or at least a perfectly genuine imitation.

Which is to say that Eberbach is being filmed. A French director is doing the German interiors for the Italian novel, *The Name of the Rose*, Umberto Eco's highbrow thriller, with its philosophical-political mysteries about a series of monastic murders in the year 1327. The exteriors are being filmed on a Roman hill where a monastery is being rebuilt to go up, in the end, in flames. The English Franciscan detective, William de Baskerville, who arrives during preparations for a conclave of royalists and papists, and incidentally solves the murders, is played by Sean Connery who now looks with his bald pate and grey beard nothing like James Bond: more like Sarastro. (The inquisitor, Bernardo Gui, is being played by F. Murray Abraham, the "Salieri" from *Amadeus*.)

A touch of finance is in the air, for the whole production will cost in the tens of millions of D-marks, mostly for décor and sets. As it happens, the director Jean-Jacques Annaud once studied medieval art at the Sorbonne, and he is not a man who ignores detail: he has ordered windows with leaded lights, potters to produce old crockery, enormous choir-benches to be carpentered, huge chandeliers to be forged and wrought, and the elongated crooked candles seem to have been dripping for centuries. It must surely be the most medieval of Middle Ages that celluloid has yet recorded. "Shall I do what others do so well and successfully?" Annaud says, "or shall I try to do what nobody else does? . . ."

IT BELONGS no doubt to the proper glory of the famous that impertinent journalism steals away their time. Umberto Eco is on the road to help "push" interest in his new book, a collection of essays about "God and the whole world." A small army of reporters (for in Germany, as elsewhere, it was a surprising, infatuating best-seller) beleaguer him, and fire tirelessly the same old tiresome questions: some of us are relieved to hear him laugh, before, with deadly seriousness and despairing impatience, he deals with the points raised.

—Have you collaborated in the film version of your novel?

UMBERTO ECO: Strictly speaking, no. I've only looked at two of the ten or fourteen various versions of the scenario; but I've been for a number of years now in contact with Annaud, and having met every two or three months we had opportunity enough to exchange ideas. We talked about the philosophy of the book, about possible places to film; we went out together to take another look at the various places which once served me as a kind of inspiration. Almost every monastery on the hills from Portugal to Yugoslavia, from Southern Italy to Western Germany was checked out—and all with the result that none of them was suitable, and we would have to build a monastery of our own. I was throughout impressed with the film director's seriousness, his enthusiasm for the book and for the screen version—which, after all, can't be a cinematic translation of the novel, rather a interpretation, and since I can't really interpret my own self I've tried to keep out of things. A 600-page story has to be condensed to a two-hour film, and I'm just not the right person to wield the knife for the cuts.

—What, then will happen to the philosophical and theological discussions? What will be left, the historical novel or the thriller?

ECO: If one reads the shooting script one gets the impression that only one dimension has survived, the detective story. But I know that a good film director can, by catching the atmosphere in a scene or a single shot, sometimes convey what a book does in some 50 pages. All in all, I'm confident it will all come out well. And thank God, Sean Connery is not what he was twenty years ago: I mean to say, he's no longer *007*, but rather . . . William de Baskerville.

—Should the film suggest the parallels between our time and the Middle Ages, or should the medieval world be presented as something quite strange and different?

ECO: Don't ask me what the film should suggest! I suspect that the film people—such sticklers for precision in everyday

UMBERTO ECO's commentary on his novel, "Reflections on 'The Name of the Rose'" was published in the April 1985 issue of ENCOUNTER. DIETER E. ZIMMER *writes regularly for the Hamburg weekly "Die Zeit."*

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detail—want rather to emphasise the historical element. A lot has been done to achieve an accurate reconstruction of the medieval world, but I have no idea of how in the end it will work: foreshortening or lengthening the past. You know, all the costumes and robes are being sewn by hand—and will the clothes that each of the characters wears estrange us (for who is used to that kind of tailoring?) or bring us closer, being so "realistic", to the ancient time? We'll have to wait and see. In any case it will be up to each spectator to try and extrapolate possible analogies.

OF GOD & THE WORLD: "It's quite normal for those in our profession to move around and think of something else, a new article, the next lecture, the relation of the One to the Many, the government in power, the problem of salvation and whether it is meaningful, the mystery of life on Mars, the melodic line of some current hit-song, and the paradox of Epimenides. I suppose that's what we mean when we speak of an 'inner life'. . . ."

I SUPPOSE one could say that Eco is one of those rare intellectuals in our day to whom no detail of everyday life is too "low" to be worthy of being seen and thought about; for apparently he manages to come up with something fresh or penetrating to say about the visible surface of our lives, often considered nothing more than trivial. This is *Eco III*, the publicist, the interpreter of the signs of the times. *Eco II* is the novelist. But *Eco I* is the Professor of Semiotics, the theory of signs, and anything but a fashionable new discipline; his lectures at the University of Bologna (about narrative theories, about "open works of art") have won him a reputation as an analyst of criticism in the area between authorship and readership. Is, then, his *Name of the Rose* an artistic work written to certain theoretical formulae?

One critic recently went on to argue that the novel is a "closed" detective story only because it is in every other respect an "open" work of art—and this allows the reader to think, if he so wishes, of the Moro Affair and the Red Brigades, or perhaps of the essence of medievalism: in other words, it requires a reader who even in his seriousness about truth and justice (and the like) is not closed to the opening of laughter.

—You once wrote that the Middle Ages were our childhood, and that we will be forced one way or another, in order to transcend our anamnesis, to return to it. In your new book you offer a whole series of analogies between that time and our own: the feeling of living in an era of transition, the sense of a lost central authority, the rise of new quasi-independent institutions, the problem of ecologically-depressed urban centres, the cultural temptations of the pictorial and the show. Then, again, the general feeling of insecurity, and the suspicion that we are living at the end of an era, of perhaps all eras. But if this is so, a hypothesis of the greatest hopelessness, then isn't there really a fundamental difference between the two epochs of European civilisation?

ECO: Naturally when one makes comparisons between past and present one looks for resemblances—the differences are so clear and crass they call for no particular emphasis. The basic non-resemblance is that the medieval spirit, when it wasn't preoccupied with the apocalyptic vision of things, considered that history must have some rational logic. Man in the Middle Ages was not lost in some idea of progress which takes our history into infinite perspectives; and he was equally saved from the notion that the world will probably come to some bad irrational end, that tomorrow—*phfft!*—for no good reason at all everything will be gone. In the Middle Ages one knew that the world would come to an end, but that this would be no accident; it was all part of a rational and divine plan. Our own imagination is caught in the idea of a possible triumph of nothingness, which never troubled the medieval spirit. That's the radical difference.

—The end that was not really an ending?

ECO: It was the end of the earthly Jerusalem, and the beginning of the heavenly one. For us there is no break between the this-worldly and the other-worldly: if anything, it would suggest the colonisation of Mars or Saturn and would only amount to a technical extension of the colonisation of our own planet. Still, what binds the two epochs together is this: the sense of living in a time of dangerous transition. It is a feeling which would be utterly strange for a Pericles or a Virgil, for they believed that their own times had achieved a stable civilisational harmony. But, today, the people who more than any other have a tendency at times to entertain a thought of having reached a kind of perfection—I mean the

Change of Habit

London

EVEN *Sean Connery could see the funny side of it. The man who made Bond the most celebrated sexual adventurer in screen history playing a monk?*

Connery has donned a full habit and had his head shaved for his starring part in his next film, "The Name of the Rose", based on the best-seller by Umberto Eco. He has been cast as a remarkable 14th-century Franciscan monk who investigates a series of murders which have taken place in an Italian Benedictine monastery.

Connery told me:

"It is such a great part. A mixture of Sherlock Holmes and Thomas More all wrapped up in a habit. I felt I needed to prepare myself.

I had to understand the religious beliefs of the period, although I must say I had never been interested in religion. Although I do find it intriguing that some people can have such a commitment to God. My father was a Catholic and my mother a Protestant, but I myself never had a strong interest in religion.

I set off to visit a monastery just outside Madrid to see if I could learn. Some of the monks had seen some of my films. But they hadn't read the book and didn't even know of it. So that caused a problem. . . ."

DAILY MAIL

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Americans—are themselves noisily and rudely reminded each day that this can't really be so. Ronald Reagan can on occasion present himself as a kind of representative of a social renaissance, but in the morning he is the first to notice that the world is still out of joint.

THE AUDITORIUM, a *Kulturkomplex* in Munich, holds some 500 persons, and every seat is taken. Standing-room only, as Eco arrives from yet another bookshop where he has been signing his name. He reads, in Italian, a short essay about blue-jeans: a translator then reads his translation. They then take turns going through the answers to the questions which pop up with spontaneous uniformity evening after evening.

—Why did you write "The Name of the Rose"? What advice would you give a young man who wants to write? (Don't write, telephone!) *Why do you like the Middle Ages, and did you expect your success?* (No, but I expected this question.) *How would you explain it all?* (Perhaps the people wanted to read the book before going to see the film.) *Did you compose the book on a word-processor?* (Yes, during the course of a Martian holiday.) *Are you writing a new novel? . . . What is truth?*

Some waited for an answer, others went on to ask other questions.

—We are being overwhelmed by an information explosion, and where will it all end?

ECO: It's difficult to say, for the only "information crisis" we know about was when there was too little information, not too much. In any case we will have to learn how to shut out, to resist, a good deal of what is being fired at us. We need Media-guerrillas.

—At first I was bored because the text you read was in a foreign language; and then, when the translation was read, it all seemed so insipid. Was this representative? Couldn't you have offered us something on a higher level?

ECO: I thought what I was telling you was reflective, even philosophical. But then I've written some twenty books, and among them are works that are really heavy going. Why don't you try staying at home and reading them, instead of coming to fancy meetings like this, arranged by the literature industry? I suggest *The Open Art-Work* and *The Theory of Semiotics*.

—But is that good enough? Shouldn't an intellectual present himself in all his fullness on every occasion?

ECO: One has to take on, as a critic, the surface of everyday life. Often the central problems can be approached only from the periphery.

—Isn't the intellectual and literary life in your homeland much more lively than ours? Don't your intellectuals participate more? Amongst us there are only a few (Enszensberger, Jens).

ECO: With us, when a foreign author turns up the audience complains about the cultural level at home, and envies the liveliness abroad.

—Have you had any echo in Eastern Europe?

ECO: A few articles on semiotics have been translated.

—Is it the case that everywhere there is a cleavage between Kultur *with a capital* K, *and the lighter kind of cultural thing?*

ECO: One could, I suppose, even make a distinction between a culture of scientific seriousness and a sparkling conversational culture *à la Voltaire*. There are even smiling cultures. But in Germany culture is always spelled with a capital *K*.

—But wouldn't more information bring at least a little more truth?

ECO: Truth is another subject. More of what we've been getting can mean less.

YOU ONCE WROTE *that if one begins a novel with the sentence "It was a beautiful morning at the end of November . . .", then you feel like Snoopy. There is only one way of beginning a novel with such a sentence: by putting the words (they are, of course, the opening words of your own novel) into the mouth of one of the characters. Naivety in language causes embarrassment nowadays. Are there other ways out of the dilemma?*

ECO: To reply would call for writing another novel which doesn't begin as if I were Snoopy.

—So what would you do?

ECO: You ask questions as if *you* were Snoopy. I can't answer, for I try to follow the course of certain ideas; and as I go on I no longer feel as free as I did at the beginning. Once when I wrote a line it was for my own pleasure, and nobody expected anything from me. Now I suspect that I write in order to answer your questions, to respond to the pressures of my publishers, to satisfy the literary critics, and to convince myself that I am quite capable of writing another novel. This creates a situation of a certain falsity, and one has to be careful. Some 30 years ago I began to collect material on the Middle Ages without any notion at all that a novel could or would emerge. For the last couple of years I've been working on something that could become a novel, or some other kind of work, perhaps something more directly reflective. Let's say that instead of a rose I am now interested in daisies, and I look at daisies, read books about them, collect posies of

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them, sow them in my garden; and one fine day I find myself writing a novel about daisies, or it could be a study in botany, or a symbolico-philosophical prolegomena about humanity and certain flowers.

—In that essay you said (this time not about literature but about everyday speech) that a half-way cultivated person could scarcely let a sentence like "I love you madly" past his lips. It's been said too often; it's become ridiculous, laughable, absurd. What then is one supposed to do? Should one write, "As Barbara Cartland would put it, 'I love you madly'. . . ." The unfortunate embarrassment remains, doesn't it? Mankind has existed for a long time, and will presumably go on for a long time yet—and still, in such a short interim time, all that was sayable has been exhausted? How, then, should half- or fully-cultivated persons, well-educated and sensitive to linguistic exhaustion, continue to speak to each other? Every word and phrase uttered in hesitation, if not shame? Should we all try speaking in quotation marks? But won't we soon have to put quotes around the quotes?

Eco: In the history of cultures there are sudden moments of rupture, at which point everything that has hitherto been said gets utterly forgotten. Then one can recapture everything anew. The other day I read that some 40% or 60% of all Americans cannot recall that the USA and the USSR were once allies. It's not at all necessary to have a holocaust in order to erase human memory, or to escape and get rid of the past. Human beings are excellently equipped with the capacity to let things slip from their mind. But is a society which remembers and is constantly concerned with its own past truly better than one which overlooks and forgets? I do not know. Fortunately, the whole past is so full and rich that we can recall at best only small chunks of it. So it is that we often quote without quite knowing it. I have been instructed by many of my critics and reviewers that I echoed old sources in *The Name of the Rose*, and I was not really aware of it; indeed the whole problem of a "usable past" is not a modern experience. Poets of the Italian Renaissance like Ariosto and Tasso quoted from medieval epics; Cervantes cited previous literature. But nowadays, with a certain distance from the texts, we read Cervantes as if he were Snoopy.

—Does this have to do with an "avant-garde"? And where would one find it in contemporary literature?

Eco: No, there isn't one, nor need there be. The dialectical relationship between "Avant-garde" and, say, "Post-Modernism" is like that between forgetting and remembering. At certain moments in history the polemical break with the past becomes necessary—at other times one needs merely a pause to catch one's breath. Corrupted as we have become by the mass media and the culture industry, we require something new each day, something important or at least sensational. But in the long perspective of, say, one or two thousand years, our century has managed to give birth to a Picasso, a Schoenberg and a Stravinsky; and that surely is enough. Or is a century required to have a permanent erection? We don't need to have a new Avant-garde every five years or so. A century full of avant-gardists would be like an army full of generals, and wouldn't that make a sensational picture for the media? Why not take it all a bit more quietly? Maybe after another century it will turn out that there truly was a significant Avant-garde around, and we just couldn't spot it. Perhaps not in literature and music; but maybe in *haute couture*, who knows?

But back to more certain things: the success of Eco's book. The first edition in 1980 (and the publisher Bompiani was taking a risk) was 4,000 copies. A half-dozen years later the world-wide editions amount to some four million copies, half of them in paper-back. In Italy: about 600,000; in the USA, 1.6 million; in West Germany, a half-million and more (if one adds the book clubs); in Britain, well over a million. Altogether there have been translations into ten languages.

I might mention that there's also been an edition in East Germany, and only a small operation was needed in order to get it into the *DDR*. One sentence had to go; it was in the preface, and wasn't any kind of an anti-Communist insult, only a statement of fact. The reference was to Prague 1968, and read: "Six days later Soviet troops invaded that unhappy city."

—I suppose one ought to add to the "success story" of a semiotics professor the sale of the film rights [several millions more]. . . . *How has all this affected your life?*

Eco: It has reduced my working day by half, from 24 hours to 12: and this has been in its way a real tragedy. In the other half of my time I don't produce or create anything any more, only try to administer what has already been produced. By writing letters, and checking translations. By giving endless interviews. If my watch is right, there's already another interviewer sitting outside. It's like a dentist's waiting-room. Next, please.

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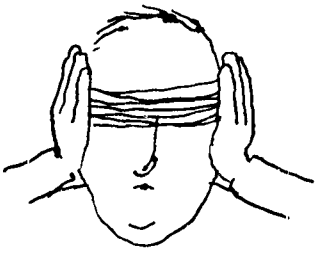
IN THE MARGIN

"Suspicion by Omission", Again

Race, Press, & Chromatic Deceits

By Melvin J. Lasky



READERS SEEM to have detected an unusual, if not uncanny, topicality in some of the recent ENCOUNTERS; and some have surmised that keeping so close to news and events is not without its editorial problems. A few were amused to note that our article on "The Decline & Fall of UNESCO" was published in the month that both Britain and the USA decided to announce their imminent departure from that hopeless and disoriented Paris organisation; and that the George Urban interview was published in January 1985 (one subscriber happened to read it on the very day!) when Max Kampelman was appointed by President Reagan to try out his flexible notions of "Negotiating with the Russians" (ENCOUNTER, February and March 1985). And then, one reader noted, in the May issue there was Paul Lendvai's account from Albania, "which I would have thought was long enough to tell me more than I wanted to know about Albanians but, lo and behold! Enver Hoxha ups-and-dies, and you are totally 'relevant' again. . . ."

Still, the timing of my own "Suspicion by Omission" ("In the Margin", ENCOUNTER, December 1984) was something else again. Despite our current phase of evidently being in tune with "the shape of things to come", we couldn't quite have known that the same problem—should the colour or "racial origin" of persons in the news be mentioned, or not?—was under special consideration by the British Press Council.

A complaint had been made to the Council against four London newspapers for the "journalistic misdemeanour" of having identified a youth of 16 who had raped five women and hacked another to death with a broken milk-bottle. He had been described (in the *Daily Mail*, the *London Standard*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and the *Daily Express*) as "black" (and also as "slightly built"). This was held to be culpably irrelevant. And the judgment of the Council is interesting enough to be quoted—especially so, since it rather reverses my original argument about the arrogance of well-meaning journalists (my context was liberal-enlightened US newspapers) indulging in self-censorship. According to the British Press Council's adjudication:

> "The Press Council has consistently held that people's race or colour should only be introduced into newspaper reports where it is relevant to the story being told.
>
> By this the council means where, for example, in a court report the colour or race of a defendant or victim has a direct bearing on the crime alleged. Another obvious example is where publishing a description may assist in the apprehension of a criminal.
>
> The fact that a crime is serious or abhorrent does not itself create such relevance. Indeed, because of the likelihood of serious crime engendering strong emotions in readers, it is more important than usual when reporting them for newspapers to beware of irrelevant references to race or colour which may encourage or pander to racial prejudice.
>
> In this case the crimes were appalling, but the fact that the youth convicted was black was irrelevant to them and should not have been introduced into the reports.
>
> The complaints are upheld."

NOW THIS, CLEARLY, puts the shoe on the other foot. I had been very sceptical about such self-censorship, convinced that one man's "relevance" was another man's "inessentials." As I wrote about the American approaches:

> "The motives are doubtless well-meaning. Yet how an informed public opinion can ever develop under such self-censored circumstances—much less come to wise and prudent conclusions about properly ordering a multiracial and ethnically plural society—is quite beyond me. . . ."

But here, in London, the censor's pencil was being brandished not by the prudent reporter, or his *bien-pensant* editor, but by the Wise Men of Fleet Street, appointed to be watchdogs of liberty and integrity!

I still feel that, in general, the roots of the problem lie in "our new cultural predicament where the precarious balance of disruptive forces dictates that no potentially explosive truths be told. . . ." Discretion is in the saddle, and the idealism of care and concern leads to "tactful omissions" which in turn lead only to what I called "Suspicion by Omission": namely, that all the heinous crimes of the day are being committed by "you-know-who". . . . Nevertheless, it is the case that in Britain the press—for a variety of its own reasons (some probably less than honourable, especially in quarters where sensationalism is the daily style)—takes a rather more straightforward attitude to "reporting the facts" than the ideologues of the struggle against racial prejudice. The *Daily Mail* printed the Press Council's ruling, but replied (8 May) that it had

> "no intention of having its editorial judgment usurped or censored by a body whose credentials are becoming increasingly devalued. This paper will continue to make its own judgments on reporting the news and let its readers decide whether they are relevant or not."

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The *London Standard* went further and, in its way, rather underlined my paradox about uninformed-readers-jumping-to-undesirable-conclusions.

> "To be selective about these details, on the principle that a mention of a person's colour fosters racial divisiveness, would lead newspaper readers to make prejudiced and inaccurate assumptions about the scale of black crime: the opposite effect to what the Press Council intends."

The *Daily Telegraph* also echoed this viewpoint, for what the Press Council is saying, in effect, is that

> ". . . there are certain facts which it is too dangerous for the people to know lest they draw false and divisive inferences from them. Apply this to race and you have opened the door to applying it to everything. What is worse, this principle is particularly perilous when used as a means of promoting racial equality. If the colour of defendants in criminal cases cannot be reported what proof can there be that justice is being impartially administered to blacks and whites? The public often makes wild and prejudiced assumptions about the relationship between race and crime; the remedy is not to suppress facts but to reveal them all and discuss them thoroughly."

THIS MAY SEEM to some who know and follow Fleet Street to be a bit too much high-mindedness. Are there no cases where the omission of a "relevant" or "interesting" detail would be morally mandatory?

Suppose for a moment that, on that fateful day in New Delhi, the first announcements of the late Indira Gandhi's assassination could have been (which they probably couldn't) "controlled" or "managed" or "censored" or "cleaned up." There would have been the grave announcement, mention of an assassin's successful murder—but no mention of the dastardly role of the Prime Minister's Sikh bodyguards. This could have been released some time later, at a cooler calmer date when the emergency shock and uncontrollable hysteria had subsided. Surely the hideous lynching parties might have been circumvented, and possibly some tens of thousands of Sikh lives, all violently destroyed during that first night, spared.

This would not, I suspect, quite fit in with the prevailing journalistic philosophy, as witness Alexander Chancellor, former editor of *The Spectator* and now a columnist for the *Sunday Telegraph*. Chancellor insists that for a newspaper the main test of "relevance" is whether a piece of information will interest its readers.

> "If a person is convicted of an horrendous crime, it is quite natural for the newspaper reader to want to know as much about him as possible—his age, height, background, and so on. Journalists are taught to deliver such facts.
>
> If the facts as revealed happen to be taken by a particular reader as confirmation of his own prejudices, that is not the newspaper's fault. An editor is not a psychiatrist."

Nor to be sure, is he a Bowdler. Israeli editions of Shakespeare cannot omit that Shylock was a Jew. Nor can Mr Julius Nyerere, the famous Shakespeare translator into Swahili, "edit out" Othello's blackness for Tanzanian readers. Yet the dilemma remains, for under certain extreme circumstances the reporter and editor and cameraman can inadvertently find themselves leading a hue-and-cry, unintentionally inciting to anger and mayhem.[1]

In the end I suppose I concur with the latitudinarians—despite the fact that in New Delhi, were it my fate to be the all-powerful censor-for-a-day, I would have surely used my blue pencil to save innocent lives. When all is said and done, John Stuart Mill provides better guide-lines than does Mrs Grundy or Mrs Whitehouse. Fleet Street is right to resist outside meddling. There is much that is wrong and insensitive in our writing about race and crime these days, but nothing that the amateurs of the race-relations industry can set right. I remain convinced that when quacks prescribe, wounds continue to fester.

STILL, A YEAR IS a long time in race relations, and 1985 may well go down as the bitter stretch during which the stratagem of ethnic benevolence at the expense of disagreeable truth-telling was rudely undermined. Harsh communal tensions and indeed murderous political developments—a London bobby hacked to death in a Tottenham riot; Zulu (or Hondo) blacks putting Indian browns to the flames in South African anti-*apartheid* marches—have radically retouched the whole picture. Tender-minded guide-lines for discretionary omissions and self-censorship disappeared almost overnight as press reporters had to identify what appeared, in deadly colour, on the TV screen. Were the latest Soweto victims white, brown, black? No one could get a firm grasp of the nature of the South African disturbances without *all* the facts, ruthlessly recorded; for the burning question soon became: Was it a simple matter of white repression of the "Black African nationalists"? And to what extent was it also an internecine warfare among the various shades of so-called "coloureds"?

Meanwhile, back on the local London scene, an English

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[1] There always seems to be an ingenious way out, an escape route for rude stereotypes which become impermissible in the present but can, perhaps, be preserved in the past tense. It is a ploy which is generally referred to as "moving the goal-posts." What mustn't be said now can be offered as items in the historical present. Thus, H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* has just been made into a new film by the director J. Lee Thompson, and not a little of the putative "old flavour" is pungently conveyed. As one film critic pointed out (David Castell, *Sunday Telegraph*, 22 December 1985):

> ". . . setting the story back in hazily-defined time allows the makers to revert to national stereotypes without offending too violently modern sensibilities. Thus the Germans are bald and guttural and stupid, the Turks are fat and greasy and stupid, and the Africans are noble and savage and very stupid indeed. ('He doesn't trust any thing that moves without eating grass', Quartermain quips of the faithful Umbopo when he won't ride in a motor car.)"

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school principal was up on charges for identifying the rising crime rate in his school as one of West Indian delinquency. Fleet Street reporters gave a minute-by-minute account of the Middlesex police siege at the end of which a stabbed baby was rescued from her captor; and the photographers with their telescopic lenses made it clear that both the child and her attacker were "Caribbean." (At the end of the long story in the *Daily Mail* [25 December 1985], it was simply recorded, almost with relief, that it was not a "mixed affair": ". . . All those involved in the siege were black.") Sports columnists had to discuss the incidents of "fascist racial abuse" in English football stadia, directed by fans and hooligans against certain players; and followers of the sport wanted to know which players, and what the vicious epithets were. A London judge at an industrial tribunal had to decide whether to award damages for a "racial insult" to a secretary in a City office named Maria de Souza; and he held that the remark—"go and get the typing done by the wog"—was "not enough to suffer a detriment under the Race Relations Act . . ." and, therefore, the regrettable incident of prejudice could not be pronounced unlawful. The Catholic headmaster of the English Martyrs School in Leicester, testifying in a case of "racial discrimination" against a dismissed teacher (Mrs Rasamah Sivasothy), said that she had humiliated and terrified her pupils, and added that "if she had been white she would have been gone long ago. . . ."

In each case there were urgencies of establishing the real and unvarnished details of a case, whether out of civic curiosity or legal procedure; and they shattered most previous preconceptions of what is seemly and proper, progressive or civilised, in the public presentation of ethnic nastiness in a "multicultural society" (which evidently did not know how to "live together", and perhaps did not even want to). Nobody knew how to find the right words, ideas, or sentiments, as vagueness gave way to misunderstanding, and small differences became aggravated by agit-prop. One Police Federation chairman in Northamptonshire expressed the pious hope that England's ethnic minorities would become "more English." He was quoted as saying:

> ". . . I believe that, when in Rome, you should do as the Romans do. Guests who live here must try to become English. If we are to have a multiracial society, then we must learn to live together."

To which Mr Michael Prescod, chairman of the Afro-Caribbean Association, angrily replied (*Daily Telegraph*, 30 November 1985):

> "I find what he said repulsive. He has done a disservice and should not be allowed to hold public office."

In these altercations, race and colour, ethnicity and indigenous culture, national habits and religious creeds were all confused and confounded, and unceremoniously tossed into what Israel Zangwill once called "the melting pot" . . . which, surely, has nowhere melted. Even in the USA, where the American press is particularly careful on denominational issues—Catholics these days are more sensitive than Jews, and both are thinner-skinned than the much-belaboured Protestant "Wasps"—the self-denying ordinances of journalism and public discourse have been under trial. I found it extremely difficult to follow (especially in the European press, including the *International Herald Tribune*, owned by the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*) the full ramifications of the case of the young American, named Jonathan Jay Pollard, who was arrested by the FBI for "spying for Israel." The stories on "J. J. Pollard" (no further identification) seemed to confine the issue to one of foreign-policy ethics among friendly military allies. But the full range of the alarm, scandal, consternation which ensued pointed to the fact that Mr Pollard, being an American Jew, had opened up the old can-of-worms about "dual nationality" and/or "double loyalties" which so-called Zionists (and Papists too, after the Kennedy Presidency) had hoped to have put behind them, generations ago.

I TRUST THAT I have made it sufficiently clear that stratagems based on obvious and fragile ambivalences cannot hold their vitality for long; and, even more, that a practice of self-censorship founded in goodwill and shoddy language has a built-in self-destruct. "Blacks" (as a whole variety of coloureds well know) were not all black; the whole "Black movement" was based on a chromatic deceit, and the lie in the soul has proved corrosive.[2] "Anti-discrimination" was not against *all* forms of discrimination; it was tactical preferential. And "equal opportunity" (or, in the USA "affirmative action") meant that some were more equal than others; and for many that signified very negative action.

A few final examples of how threadbare the semantic stratagems, and the flawed ethic of progressivism behind them, have become.

In the Left-dominated Haringey Council in North London, led by a flamboyant West Indian militant named Bernie Grant, the campaign against racial and sexual discrimination has been running in high gear, fuelled over the recent years with a militant idealism on behalf of the unfortunate "victims of middle-class society." Yet how does it work in practice when jobs come to be filled, Civil Service examinations taken, and equal opportunities at long last installed? As one Haringey councillor put it the other day (*Daily Mail*, 7 January 1986): "What it amounts to is that if you are white, British and male and applying for a job in Haringey, you may as well forget it. . . ."

Some 50 persons applied for an £11,000-a-year appointment. The final twelve who were to be considered were on a special panel's short list. Given its ideological complexion, it proceeded to alter the number of points that had been previously given. Under the heading of "*Ability to understand the needs of black and ethnic minorities*", the scores of two were doubled, thus advantaging the "Black and

[2] No less so, I should add, than the complex of "whiteness" which led during the centuries of Western Empires in Afro-Asia to a disastrous racial complex. See the astute analysis of colours by Philip Mason in his ENCOUNTER (April 1968) essay: ". . . 'but O! My Soul is White': On the Confusion of Biological Accident & Symbolic Metaphor."

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Asian" candidates. (Evidently the "whites" scored nothing, and Irish candidates only one.) Under the heading of "*Ability to communicate the needs of women*", the women candidates' scores were doubled; the men scored nothing. Under the heading of "*Ability to work on one's own*" (oh, that hated middle-class individuality!), well, the whole category was simply scrapped. At the end of the day, the official explanation (from Mr Nakendra Makanzi) was that it was all "a way of countering discrimination"!

IN A SENSE, what we are going through is yet another tortuous exercise in the arbitrary imposition of Rousseau's "general will" (or what the generals of the Enlightenment's army hold it to be). If necessary, as the fateful phrase in the *Contrat social* has it, everyone will be "forced to be free": to have the right sentiments, to be above and beyond prejudice, to be enlightened. J. L. Talmon called it, in his intellectual history of the period, the origins of "totalitarian democracy."

For his recent television documentary a BBC producer put cameras into an old Victorian house in Devon where he had assembled a white manager (he had lost his post when Rhodesia became Zimbabwe); a white pensioner from Peckham (where he had been twice mugged by black youths); and a white lawyer (fearful of her property values as the neighbourhood became more ethnically mixed). To this group he added a number of sensitive blacks, including a nurse, a welfare counsellor, and an academic researcher. The producer, a Rousseauian *bien-pensant* if there ever was one, was convinced that "after a week together, the racists' position would collapse. . . ."

Alas, nothing went right. The bizarre and misguided experiment failed dismally, as most of the group ended with their views quite as rigid as at the outset, possibly even more so after tears, hateful arguments, and daily bitterness. They had all been foolishly encouraged to act out their prejudices, and the ensuing theatre was not therapy but tragedy. The participants, racists and victims alike, had found the manipulated experience "appalling . . . shocking . . . depressing." The BBC producer almost seemed to be apologising when he confessed: "I was just trying to make a good film. I knew that very likely someone would get hurt. It was not meant to be therapeutic for either the whites or the blacks. . . ." As one outraged television critic (Mary Kenny) wrote, in reviewing the screening of the BBC production, *Are you a Racist?* (BBC-2, 6 January 1986):

> "This was a wicked programme to have made: its consequences will have been almost wholly detrimental. . . . Written and produced by Edward Goldwyn, it ended with a little sermon to all the poor bloody infantry out there: . . . 'We must find a way to change the racist views.' I say we must also find a way to stop this mischief of stirring up hatred in a society which has been historically characterised by its tolerance. . . ."

FINALLY, AN INCIDENT IN New York which also suggests why the shaky foundation of the "race relations industry" is collapsing. In the ruins something new and strange is emerging, with perhaps an even more dispiriting mix of what a harassed and manipulated citizenry may find fair and proper in a darkling struggle for rights, privileges, and self-identities.

No doubt about it, the New York City police force has been predominantly white in its leadership and recruitment; and there were inevitable handicaps in maintaining law-and-order in a community of such mixed racial and ethnic character. Time was when police candidates made sure that their application forms were "unexceptionable." Times have changed. What is now happening is that white policemen—who were passed over for promotions to sergeant, under the City's racial-quota plan—are suddenly asking to be re-classified as "Blacks" or "Hispanics." The police officers chose to call themselves white when they joined the force; but they are now insisting that they are really members of "minority groups", and thus eligible for promotion ahead of whites with higher scores on the test.

Well, they would say that now, wouldn't they?

Can they prove it? Once quotas—ever since the time of Ellis Island and Anglo-Saxon immigration laws, a hated, evil, "un-American" thing—became acceptable, it was only a short step to finding Nazi-like methods of "determining", Nuremberg-style, one's grandfather.[3] Indeed one Police Commissioner (for "equal opportunity"), Mr George Sanchez, agreed that "the cops can qualify by proving that either one parent, two grandparents or four great-grandparents were black or born in a Spanish-speaking country. . . ." As Sanchez added, "One guy just put down that he *didn't want to be white any more*. . . ." Surely anyone can say that?

The Hispanic Society quickly protested, for this could be the long-awaited backlash even if whites were not exactly standing up, in a last-ditch struggle, for whitehood. Could it be that, since nobody is truly "white" (Aldous Huxley suggested "pinko-grey"), you can call yourself anything you want and take the glittering prizes and annual raises, shiny badges, better pensions, and extra holidays?

There may be a moral here, for in what Goethe called *Farbenlehre*, chromatic lies have caught on, and old deceptions are now newly deceived. The lesson may not have been lost on the Hispanic Society's leader, Mr Luis Salgado, who in touching tones of wailing mournfulness saw that the affirmations of yesteryear were becoming the negations of tomorrow. Where the community consents to trickery, tricksters grow and flourish. Or, as Salgado put it, "The moment we win something, they find some way of taking it away from us. . . ." Defeat has been snatched from the jaws of victory. As he recognised, "There's really nothing we can

[3] The Nazi reference was used by the editor of the New York *Daily News*, in a leading article (6 December 1985) defending the practice of "racial discrimination" with the conventional (if still perverse) rationalisation that the-end-justifies-the-means. It might be "unpleasant" and "distasteful" and it "*is* reminiscent of the Nazi Nuremberg racial laws. There's no way around that. But 'reminiscent' is different from 'the same.' Purpose is crucial. . . ."

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do, if they can prove what they are. . . ." Well, you can bet on it that some 20% are likely to decide that they "*don't like being white any more.*" They will be discovering a shadowy grandfather in Haiti or documenting a long-lost grandmother in Brazil (unless Portuguese doesn't technically qualify as "Spanish-speaking"), and a whole host of converts will proceed efficaciously to fill the 20% of officer posts reserved under the quota plan and its corrupting temptations.[4]

MORE ILLUSIONS shattered! Journalists do not serve the truth when they think it might be a shade more morally expedient to prevaricate. Reformers do not help minorities when they treat majorities with the same subterfuges which have always marked the meanness of discrimination. *Affirmative* cannot mean negative; *equal* dare not signify more-equal or less-equal. For there appears to be, or so I prefer to believe, some inner logic in the clash of social forces whereby that which is unnaturally promulgated or arbitrarily administered tends, in the short or long run, to destabilise itself and to self-destruct. On all these matters we will have to be picking ourselves up out of the rubble.

[4] For the most perceptive interpretation of what he saw as "the sphinx of affluence" and "the pitfalls of welfare", see the late Ignazio Silone's profound essay (in ENCOUNTER, March and April 1968), entitled "Re-Thinking Progress."

AUTHORS

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David Pryce-Jones's books include a critical study of Graham Greene (Oliver & Boyd, n.e. 1973); a biography of Unity Mitford (n.e. Star Books, 1981); an historical study, *Paris in the Third Reich*, and a biography of Cyril Connolly (Collins, 1981, 1983). His most recent novel, *The Afternoon Sun*, has just been published by Weidenfeld.

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Ben Segal, Emeritus Professor of Semitic Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, was Principal of Leo Baeck College from 1982-85. His books include *Aramaic Texts from North Saqqara* (Egypt Exploration Society, 1982) and *Edessa* (Oxford University Press, 1970).

Christopher Cviić, a Croat from Yugoslavia, where he attended school and university, came to Britain in 1954 to work for the BBC. He took a further degree at the London School of Economics, and carried out post-graduate research in Yugoslav history at St Antony's College, Oxford. Since 1969 he has been with *The Economist*, specialising in Eastern Europe and travelling regularly to Yugoslavia. He also edits the monthly journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The World Today*.

Max Beloff, Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford, from 1957-74, and Principal of the University College at Buckingham, 1974-79, was created a life peer in 1981. His most recent books are *Wars and Welfare, Britain 1914-1945* (Edward Arnold, 1984) and, as co-author, *The Government of the United Kingdom* (Weidenfeld, 1985).

David Spanier, formerly diplomatic correspondent of *The Times*, is now diplomatic correspondent of LBC, the London radio station. His books include *Europe, Our Europe*, *Total Poker*, and *Total Chess* (Secker & Warburg, 1972, 1977, 1984).

Anthony Thwaite, Co-Editor of ENCOUNTER from March 1973 to March 1985, returns in April from a year on a Japan Foundation Fellowship attached to the University of Tokyo, and will join the Board of André Deutsch, Ltd. and the Advisory Board of ENCOUNTER. He is co-editor of *The Penguin Book of Japanese Verse* (1964) and co-author of the Thames and Hudson *Japan in Colour* (1967). *Poems 1953-83*, his collected poems, was published by Secker & Warburg in 1984, his next book, a series of monologues portraying 17th-19th-century travellers, has the working title *Voices from Japan*.

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LETTERS

Tucholsky & Warhol

I HAVE NOTED that several of your writers (and Anglo-American journalists, generally) like to quote that aphoristic crack of Andy Warhol to the effect that nowadays "everybody's famous for 15 minutes. . . ."

But it is not all that original with him. Readers of that great Weimar wit and satirist Kurt Tucholsky (who died in 1935, in exile from Hitler's Germany) will recall his verses entitled *Wo ist der Schnee* . . . (plagiarising, or borrowing, in his turn the famous French line *Où sont les neiges d'antan?* . . .).

Like the snows of yesteryear, style and fashion come and go, every week producing another genius on the scene, Brecht replacing Suderman, as if the literary life was all a branch of industry—"*pro Mann einen Monat Unsterblichkeit* (one month of immortality per person)."

That Warhol, 30 or 40 years later, should have come up with the same notion is, as the Tucholsky refrain has it, "*rein menschlich irgendwie* (somehow very human)."

MICHAEL NAUMANN

Rowohlt Verlag
Hamburg

"Greek to Me"

I WAS INTERESTED to read John Carr's article on the contemporary Greek language, which you republished from *The Athens Star* (ENCOUNTER, January). In his attempt to show that the Greek language is in a sorry state, he is guilty of some pretty gross exaggerations.

He states, for instance, that, since demotic Greek was made the official language of Greece in 1976 (by a Conservative government, I might add), "syntax has all but disappeared." Since syntax means the way in which sounds are combined meaningfully together, Carr's statement would be true only if the Greeks had practically stopped producing anything but meaningless combinations of sounds. I can assure you, Sir, that the syntax of spoken and written Greek today is no less complex and varied than it was ten years ago, when the rot allegedly set in! As for Left-wingers using "simplified" instead of "traditional" noun endings, it is true that there are two alternative case endings in certain instances (the one Demotic, the other Purist). But one is no more "simple" than the other.

The word *taverna* (originally from Latin) has been in the Greek language since Biblical times. Isn't 2000 years' residence long enough for naturalisation? Such words—which are fully declinable—constitute a problem only for a few extreme chauvinists. If such people had a British counterpart, it would be someone who objected to *bungalow* because it wasn't English. A more serious problem is posed by the increasing number of words that don't fit into the declensional or other patterns of the language. Nevertheless, the Greeks have been doing a remarkable job in inventing Greek words for the vast majority of new concepts that have sprung up in recent decades.

As for "linguistic terrorism" (in so far as it exists at all in Greece), I suggest that it is practised not so much by "ignorant and semi-ignorant amateurs of the science of language"—surely every citizen has the right to voice his opinions about his national language—as by professional linguists who believe they have a right to monopolise control over the language.

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Stove's Popper

D. C. STOVE's "Karl Popper & the Jazz Age" (ENCOUNTER, June 1985) is a well-written polemic, but hopelessly wrong. He is, I am convinced of it, trying to turn things over just for the sake of it. There were some good jokes, but parts did not make sense.

For example, who can deny that it is more useful to say "nothing travels faster than light" than to say "light travels at more than 30 m.p.h."? The former statement is less probable, but—for as long as it can be believed—it is more useful. So why is Popper so perverse in making the point a general one?

And again Stove is very rude indeed about people who cannot tell the difference between the words "irrefutable" and "unfalsifiable." He says that the latter means "consistent with every observation-statement"; but that is quite wrong—Stove's definition fits the word "unfalsified." He uses the word "unfalsifiable" throughout as if it meant "unfalsified"; and to him, presumably, that is what it does mean. But "unfalsifiable" means "consistent with *every possible* observation-statement." Now, if a theory can deal with *every possible observation statement* then it cannot be refuted. (How can it?) So why am I so very silly if I use a word meaning "cannot be refuted" to mean the same as "irrefutable"?

I was born in 1956 and my hang-ups are not those of Stove's generation. He may well belong in the Jazz Age with Popper, but I do not. I have no horror of Victoriana, and no axe to grind. I *would* like Stove to explain himself in a way that makes sense.

ANDREW BALLANTYNE

Sheffield

MR ANDREW BALLANTYNE thinks I need to be told that "unfalsifiable means 'consistent with *every possible* observation-statement'." But I do not: I know it, and I stated it. On p. 67, and with the italics there in the text, I wrote that "unfalsifiable" means "consistent with *every* report of an actual or possible observation." How could I have been more explicit? Nor did I use the word in any other sense than this one.

As to "unfalsifiable" and "irrefutable", Mr Ballantyne should consider the following two statements: "*That witches exist, is unfalsifiable*", and "*That witches exist, is irrefutable.*" The first is true (since "witches exist" is consistent with every report of an actual or possible observation). But the second is false (since it entails that witches exist). So a statement's being unfalsifiable is not enough to make it irrefutable.

Mr Ballantyne thinks, and so do most of us, that "Light travels at more than 30 m.p.h." is more probable than "Nothing travels faster than light." But we must be wrong, if Popper is right. For both of these are contingent statements and of unrestricted universality, and Popper thinks that all such statements have the *same* probability, both *a priori* and in the light of any possible evidence: namely, the probability 0.

Which naturally prompts the qustion: why does Popper demand that scientists prove, *empirically*, the falsity of statements whose falsity is already certain *a priori*? What possible justification could there be for such a total waste of energy? No one knows the answer to this question: it is just one of the mysteries of Popperism.

Orwell says somewhere that, on matters of Christian doctrine, the ordinary Christian can hardly open his mouth without uttering a heresy. This is true, and something similar happens whenever amateur philosophers undertake to expound the philosophy of their masters. They can be absolutely relied on to get it wrong. This is a source of endless mortification to the masters, of course, but it cannot be helped.

D. C. STOVE

University of Sydney

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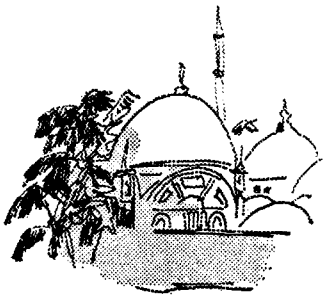
Tale of an Un-Magic Carpet



Istanbul

MEHMET *is 35 years old and was born here in Turkey. The first 20 years of his life he spent in a village near the famous carpet centre of Kayseri in eastern Anatolia: and the family of eight were all sustained by the skills of artful weaving. They made do, with enough for the daily bread and the occasional Islamic feasts. As Mehmet says, looking back, "I know it sounds hackneyed, but we were poor and happy. . . ."*

Towards the end of the 1960s, however, there were the seductive tales from the Anatolians who had tried their fortunes in Western Germany, at the time the so-called "Gastarbeiter-paradies Deutschland." Soon it had welcomed its "one-millionth foreign worker" and rewarded his adventurousness to leave hearth-and-home and take a job in the Ruhr by giving him a BMW motorcycle. "So I packed my few things together and also set out on the journey to the promised land", Mehmet says, and not without an ironic undertone. "I knew what I wanted—to work a few years in the West, and then to return home and have untroubled years among my own friends."

THE "TOUR OF DUTY" **was to last some 9 years, as a mechanic in Cologne and Leverkusen. During those years pressure mounted to put a stop to "foreign recruitment" (in 1973); the cry was even heard in the land "*Türken raus!*" (Out with the Turks), and proposals were rife as to how to facilitate voluntary repatriation. "No", says Mehmet, "it wasn't very difficult to make a decision to leave and return home." He had a few thousand D-Marks in his pocket, an impressive (if 7-year-old model) Mercedes-Benz automobile, a colour TV-set (with video-cassette recorder), and all went with him to his Turkish birthplace.**

He was quickly reminded of old Anatolian realities, and soon sobered up. "What can one do with a big Mercedes car in the tiny lanes of my little village? Start it up and step on the gas in order to go to the vegetable-stand on the corner in order to buy a couple of *Kavun* (honey-dew melons) and a pound of apples? There was just too much room in the boot for that. . . ." The telly and the video proved no more serviceable, especially in an area without electricity. But evidently Mehmet was not discouraged, for he established a little business to sell farming implements and even machines which he had come to know about (tractors, seeders etc.). But then he didn't quite know, as he confesses, how in the world he was going to get spare parts for those machines in the village in order to keep them all serviced. Things didn't quite work, and ends didn't meet. Nor was this all. "I noticed a disagreeable thing—when I came into the local coffee-house it seemed to quiet down. Only rarely did somebody come over to my table to join me. When a chat got going I always seemed to sense a distance, something which I hardly ever felt as a *Gastarbeiter* in Germany . . . where we were, all of us Turks, with some feelings of 'togetherness'. . . ."

WHAT HAPPENED TO MEHMET *has happened to many: uprooting, alienation, call it what you will—and indeed a well-known sociologist at the University of Istanbul has devoted himself to researching the problem. His thesis is brutally frank: "Whoever makes the decision to leave for foreign parts as a 'guest-worker', thereby has lost his homeland. Not infrequently he will be better treated in Germany, in the West, than he will be on his return to Turkey. But, I am afraid, neither abroad or at home will he ever be treated again as 'an equal among equals'. . . ."*

Often it is the case that there is guilt and responsibility on both sides. There is the jealousy and resentment of those who were left behind. The "guest-workers" return home with cash in their pockets and with new status-symbols. They feel themselves now to be "somebodies"; they have bettered themselves, and want to be greeted as benefactors. It sometimes happens that even his own family turns away from, and indeed against, the returnee. The children apparently get the worst of it. Abroad they had a difficult time "integrating", but often not without success in school and neighbourhood. And now they've been torn away from the only little world they knew, have come to a place called "home" in which they have to compete with, if not to struggle against, a suspicious local youth that views them with hostility. Nor do they speak their "own" language with any facility, getting inflections and accents wrong; and many are better with Bavarian or Berlin dialects than with Anatolian ways of speaking.

Hopes turn out to be illusions. A few cases became famous, when groups of returnees banded themselves together in "co-operatives", put their hard-earned money into a little factory making Western-type machines (with a good reserve of spare parts); but they were the exception that proved the rule. It was not will or energy or ambition that was missing; what was lacking was perhaps "managerial leadership", or maybe only someone who could help with sound, experienced, realistic advice. The sociologists and economists speak of a "deficient infrastructure", not strong enough to support modernising efforts.

MEHMET **lives now in Istanbul, and he has a job helping one of the hundreds of carpet salesmen who ply their trade in this Mecca of Western tourism. What he has picked up of German, or another European language, now stands him in good stead. He says he's keeping his head above water, but confesses that for the time being there's not much chance of a good place to live, not to mention an automobile or even a wife. Life these days in Istanbul is not cheap, especially when one has to make do without the present support of living together with a large "extended" family. On his own he has found it slow work to "accommodate" himself, to find friends. He takes some consolation from the fact that there are many others around who have gone through the same "destiny" as he has. . . . If Istanbul is supposed to be the bridge between Orient and Occident, then Mehmet is an example (if a somewhat bitter one) of living under-the-bridge: living between two cultures, not properly at home anywhere.**

V. K. R. Stahr

THE *author is a correspondent for the German daily newspaper* DIE WELT *(Bonn).*

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Kinnock's Way

EDWARD PEARCE says [ENCOUNTER, December] that Mr Neil Kinnock "should be given credit for loving the words he uses and for using them gracefully." Yes indeed, and so should Pearce himself, whose prose is a delight to read but who, like his hero, displays a pitiful ignorance of the nature of political power. He argues that a Labour Party can be a credible reformist body even if it "retains unilateralism as its defence policy." In another part of the same issue of ENCOUNTER Melvin J. Lasky rightly draws our attention to Mrs Kinnock's remark in Moscow, from which her husband made no effort to distance himself, assuring Mr Gorbachov that, should there be Soviet missiles at Greenham Common, she would find them as objectionable as she finds the American variant.

The quite colossal foolishness of supposing that, if the Soviet authorities should arrive, peace protests would still be permitted, is characteristic of the innocence of both the Kinnocks who (like Pearce) have no grasp of the realities of the struggle which the Soviet Union will continue to wage against those whom its rulers perceive as their inveterate enemies.

In his concluding paragraph Pearce tells us that the real danger in "the looming post-Thatcher era" is that all power will pass to British civil servants. If he really believes that it is the British—and not the Soviet bureaucracy who threaten our freedom, he should be made to read Michael Voslensky's invaluable *Nomenklatura* (Bodley Head, 1983) and Peter Reddaway's chilling and well-authenticated studies of Soviet psychiatric wards, *Soviet Psychiatric Abuse* (Gollancz, 1984).

NORA BELOFF

London

MISS BELOFF will see if she looks again that I was writing about the potential popularity (i.e. electability) of Mr Kinnock *in spite of* his unilateralism. To launch an assault on my "pitiful ignorance of" the Soviets is thus 180 degrees irrelevant.

EDWARD PEARCE

London

"Journalistic Malpractice"?

I WAS very pleased to see that M. J. Lasky, in his article on why journalists are mistrusted ("Towards a Theory of Journalistic Malpractice", ENCOUNTER, November), chose to put the problem in a long historical perspective.

Still, one hopes that the short perspective in which Media Watchers catch journalists out in erratic irresponsibilities is not abandoned. Only this morning, on the BBC World Service—which in recent years has been sounding more like the Third World Service (with more than anybody wants to know about Upper Volta and Namibia, and precious little about Europe and America)—I heard a reference to an Arab protest against Israel which included the phrase, "supported by Syria, Libya, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and other Islamic countries. . . ." Evidently Yassir Arafat has already been crowned President by the BBC. . . .

Nevertheless, sloppiness and carelessness are not, as Lasky argues, the essence of the matter. A new Estate has grown up and developed in strength over the past two centuries; and just as the Third Estate took it upon itself to sit in judgment on the power and privileges of the first two Estates, just so has a Fourth Estate come along to pronounce according to its own lights. They pretend that those lights are pure illumination, but they have thrown too many shadows over so many issues to accept that uncritically. Where does that leave us? With an incipient Fifth Estate that will criticise the critics and make sure the custodians exercise proper custody?

WE MUST, to be sure, guard against being ourselves arrogant judges of arrogance, especially in these days when the men of the media have been taking severe blows in the backlash of a sceptical public opinion. The famous distrust of war correspondents expressed in the Grenada affair, when the media were totally excluded (and with popular approbation), is one example. The Westmoreland and Sharon cases which Lasky discusses are others; and I would recommend in the latter connection the hair-raising documentation in Dov Aharoni's book just published here (and by Steinmatzky, N.Y.), *General Sharon's War against Time Magazine: His Trial and Vindication*. The symbolic moment of the triumph of the Third Estate can be said to be when the Queen said of her bread-hungry subjects, Let them eat cake. . . . The symbolic moment of the current crisis of the Fourth Estate is, then, the moment when *Time* Editors (and not only they) said of their truth-hungry subscribers, Well, let them read fiction. . . .

One last point. I have been following in *The Times* (London) the trials and tribulations of the Murdoch organisation, including the *Times*' journalists, the *Sun*'s editors, the *News of the World*'s printers, et al. In *The Times* of 5 February there is an extraordinary article by Clifford Longley, a *Times* editor and the leader of the Union of Journalists which didn't go out on strike when the militant trade-unionists called for one. The difficulties were great, the complications were many. Such is life. But what has happened to the "bright confident morning" of the journalistic profession? We got some of the facts, certainly not all of them. We were told (selectively) what happened, who said (some of the time) what; and the like.[1] And, in the end, editors and correspondents who tell us loudly and insistently who is right and wrong in the Middle East, in South Africa, in Central America, in Reagan's "Foggy Bottom", just couldn't get it all together. Clifford Longley's apologetic article in *The Times* was pitiful—for

> "we, of all journalists, are conditioned to even-handedness, to seeing every side of every argument, and to the professional detachment which gives us the automatic habit of non-involvement in other people's crises. . . ."

If they'll believe that they'll believe anything.

At any rate, the hubris and arrogance are exposed by the mealy-mouthedness when it came to reporting the reporters, and editorialising about the editors. Where were you, O Fourth Estate, during the battle of Fort Murdoch? They rush to all wars to cover all battles—but their own. They exult in triumphs, wax eloquent over defeats. But here, in the Longley confession, there is a ringing historic confession. As he writes in mournful tones,

> ". . . We are not sure whether we have lost or won."

At long last the "uncertainty principle" comes to a profession which has been tragically short over centuries on a primary quality of questioning, tentative, humane scepticism.

JONATHAN LEV

Jerusalem

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[1] There are some notable exceptions. One should mention the sharp writings of Paul Johnson in *The Spectator* and Edward Pearce in ENCOUNTER. But as Bernard Levin, the "Thunderer" himself, makes clear in his column ("Fleet Street: Now the truth can be told", *The Times*, 3 February 1986), ". . . The reason why I could never write the story before should add an even sharper perspective to the picture."

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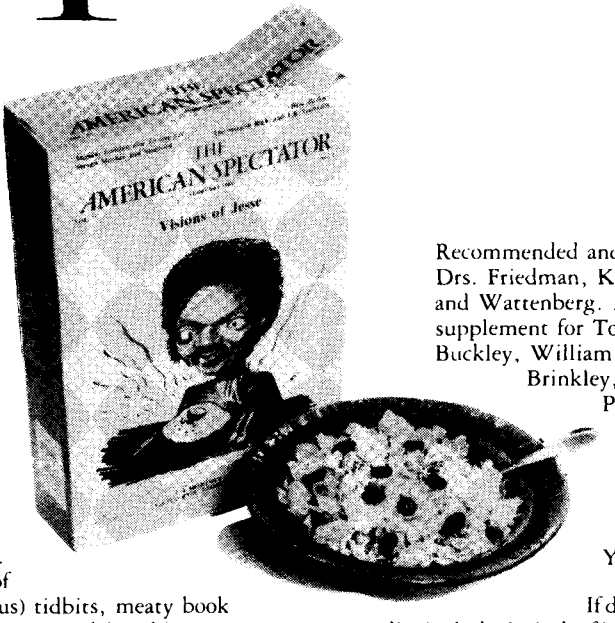
Cerebral supplement.



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Life & Letters Today

Washington, D.C.

WORDS, WORDS . . . : *In another small blast of the trumpet against bureaucratic verbosity, this list, issued without comment, is circulating around Government departments in Washington . . .*

Lord's Prayer: 56 words.
23rd Psalm: 118 words.
Gettysburg Address: 226 words.
Ten Commandments: 297 words.
United States Department of Agriculture Order on the price of cabbage: 15,629 words.

DAILY MAIL

Birmingham

LEGITIMACY: *Calling a man a black bastard may not be racial abuse, but no different from saying someone is Scottish, Welsh or Asian and illegitimate, according to an industrial tribunal in Birmingham.*

In its experience such expressions are in common use on the shopfloor, "but it is not intended that there should be any actual racial meaning."

The tribunal rejects a claim of unfair dismissal, and a further claim of racial discrimination, by Mr Zedekiah Mills, a stacking truck driver, who lost his job at Austin Rover's Longbridge plant last year when he hit a foreman, who, he claimed, called him a "black bastard." A week-long strike followed his dismissal.

The incident took place when the two men were arguing.

THE TIMES

Lansing, Michigan

TESTING: **Students at Michigan State University think that Galileo was an opera singer, painter Rubens is a sandwich, Mao Tse-tung was a Buddhist leader, and Picasso was the one who painted the Sistine Chapel.**

The students were given 132 important names, dates and places in history to describe in a test of general knowledge. The best pupil only managed to get 25 right.

THE STANDARD

New York City

LIBEL IN AMERICA: *Bernie Cornfeld is a fat, bald-headed old hustler and a lawbreaker. That's what James Brady called him in a column in "The Post" last year. Bernie—a former boyfriend of Victoria Principal who spent 11 months in a Swiss jail after his Investors Overseas Services lost hundreds of millions of dollars—sued Brady for libel. But Acting Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Leonard Cohen tossed the case out last week, ruling: "The passages in question . . . are primarily based upon truth, as it is undisputed that Cornfeld is evidently fat, old (at 56), bald-headed and a lawbreaker."*

As for hustler:

"not necessarily derogatory. Common usage can connote a go-getter or over-achiever."

NEW YORK POST

New York

REMEMBERING THE BLITZ: **Correction—Because of an editing error, an article on Wednesday about recent West German television programmes dealing with the Nazi era incorrectly described a mini-series, "The War of the Bombers." The series did mention the Luftwaffe's bombing of London in 1940.**

NEW YORK TIMES

London

HOMERIC: *The following pair of telegrams [Leonard Blundun writes], exchanged many years ago between a boarder at school and his brother at home, combines* **1**, *a piece of vital bad news;* **2**, *an anxious request;* **3**, *an assurance, somehow double-edged, that the request has been complied with; and* **4**, *an austere but heavily laden warning; not to mention* **5**, *a consecutive tenfold alliteration;* **6**, *a dramatic syntactical reversal; and* **7**, *a climax promising imminent misery for one brother but conceivably mischievous enjoyment for the other; the whole producing, in a mere eight words, a sort of Homeric poetry, sung to the gentle humming of the telegraph lines:*

FAILED EXAM PREPARE PAPA.

PAPA PREPARED PREPARE YOURSELF.

THE TIMES

New York

"ETHNIC": **New York Governor Mario Cuomo's main problem for the Presidential candidacy is that he is very New York and very Italian. There has never been an "ethnic" President—they have all had English, Irish, Dutch or German names—and so Cuomo would be a gamble.**

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

London

VALETS: *Richard Ingrams asks, "Who said, 'No man is a hero to his valet'?" In his essay on repentance, written between 1585 and 1588, Michel de Montaigne wrote,*

"men have seemed miraculous to the world, in whom their wives and valets have never seen anything even worth noticing. Few men have been admired by their own households (*peu d'hommes ont été admirés par leurs domestiques*)."

Politicians, take note.

THE SPECTATOR

London

MIX-UP: **At school she was known as "inky Jane." She did all in her power to avoid reading aloud in class because she was dyslexic. Yet yesterday Jane Shephard, 30, became the latest Open University graduate, and is on her way to becoming a doctor [John Izbicki reports].**

"I left school—an independent called Buchan School on the Isle of Man—an abysmal failure. I could manage only five O-levels and it was not until I was 22 that it was discovered I was dyslexic", she said.

"I did everything to get out of reading aloud. I used to drop my book on the floor or blow my nose. I couldn't read until I was nine. I always mixed up letters like *b*, *d* and *p*.

"I remember having to write an essay on Freud at school and writing about Fraud."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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